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"So-Called Sculpture" and "Teetotalistic Sentiments:" Cogswell Fountains in Late Nineteenth-Century San Francisco

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List of Abbreviations

CDNC: California Digital Newspaper Collection, Center for Bibliographic Studies and Research, University of California, Riverside, <http://cdnc.ucr.edu>.

CHS: California Historical Society

HDC: Henry Daniel Cogswell

SFPL: San Francisco Public Library

Contextualizing "So-Called Sculpture" and Cogswell's "Teetotalistic Sentiments"

The Cogswell tomb, sometimes referred to as a Mausoleum for Worthy Dead, in Oakland, California's Mountain View Cemetery rises over sixty feet high, towering over the rest of the cemetery.[1] This "California Westminster Abbey" required over 400 tons of granite and cost approximately $60,000 to build in 1882, roughly over 1.5 million dollars today.[2] For some time it was regarded as the largest and most expensive mausoleum in the country, requiring over fifty train cars (some custom built) to ship the granite across the country.[3] The central monument—a sort of obelisk topped with forms and stars—is surrounded by statues of female figures embodying faith, hope, charity, and temperance (fig. 1). Since 1900, the monument has been the resting place of Henry Daniel Cogswell, whose face is also carved into its base.

This mausoleum, a visible symbol of grandeur, was just one of many monuments that H.D. Cogswell erected over the course of a few decades at the close of the nineteenth century. He erected fountains in the San Francisco Bay Area and throughout the country. One commentator opined that his "fountain statues sprang up like metallic fungi all over New England" as well as New York and D.C.[4] Most of the monuments he erected were not commemorative themselves, but functioned as drinking fountains intended to quench

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[1] "The Many Good Deeds of Dr. Cogswell," Press Democrat, Volume XLIII, Number 80, 11 July 1900, California Digital Newspaper Collection (CDNC), Center for Bibliographic Studies and Research, University of California, Riverside, http://cdnc.ucr.edu; [Carton 1, Folder 47], Henry D. Cogswell Papers, BANC MSS 84/61 c, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.
[2] [Carton 1, Folder 47], H.D.C. Papers, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley; "$60,000 in 1882 → 2019 | Inflation Calculator." U.S. Official Inflation Data, Alioth Finance, 15 Oct. 2019, https://www.officialdata.org/us/inflation/1882?amount=60000.
[3] "Death of a Philanthropist," *San Francisco Chronicle*, July 9, 1900: 5. *NewsBank: America's News – Historical and Current*.
[4] Idwal Jones, "The Pioneer Prohibitionist," *The San Francisco Examiner,* February 7, 1925. ProQuest Historical Newspapers: U.S. West Collection.

the public's thirst while furthering the ideal of temperance. His fountains had a pedestal dispensing water and were topped with decorative sculptures, many of which were adorned with a statue of Cogswell (fig. 5). Cogswell figures prominently in early California's historical record as a philanthropist known largely for these fountains. In San Francisco newspapers at the end of the nineteenth century, Cogswell and his fountains were popular subject matter due to the harsh criticism—and sometimes defense—they received.

In an incident both contemporary newspapers and more recent scholars have discussed, one of Cogswell's statues was lassoed from its base late at night on New Year's Day 1894 becoming a media sensation that exemplifies how publics negotiate space through physical monuments and their defacement. Cogswell sometimes surfaces in scholarly articles in reference to the artists who tore down his fountain, in local history books and news bits, and even as a subject in his own right.[5] Art historian Frederick Moffat's article is by far the most thorough account regarding Cogswell's life and his fountains. For the most part, however, Cogswell and his fountains often appear as anecdotal stories of an eccentric man and his statues who were torn down under the justification of "taste." Printed news sources from the 1880s and 1890s frequently

[5] Frederick Moffat's article on Cogswell provides a picture of Cogswell's life and philanthropic efforts as well as processes by which he came to produce and donate his fountains, "The Intemperate Patronage of Henry D. Cogswell," *Winterthur Portfolio* 27, no. 2/3 (1992): 123-43. www.jstor.org/stable/1181369 A recent monograph published on the history of the time capsule even includes an entire chapter dedicated to Cogswell's time capsule from 1879 under the Ben Franklin fountain, Nick Yablon, *Remembrance of Things Present: The Invention of the Time Capsule* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2019). Works on Bohemian San Francisco also mention Cogswell's fountains: Christine Scriabine, "Bruce Porter: San Francisco Society's Artful Player," *California History* 85, no. 3 (2008): 48–72, https://doi.org/10.2307/40495164; Marvin R. Nathan, "San Francisco's Fin de Siècle Bohemian Renaissance," *California History* 61, no. 3 (1982): 196–209, https://doi.org/10.2307/25158111.

mention Cogswell and his fountains, reflecting public monuments (or at least Cogswell's) were a source of debate over what was appropriate within public spaces and for art more generally.

A *History of the San Francisco Bay Region* published in 1924 reflects the persistence of Cogswell's fountains as a symbol of ridicule in the name of aesthetic or artistic righteousness beyond the 1890s.[6] In the chapter titled "Painters and Sculptors," the author Bailey Millard anecdotally mentions a Cogswell fountain in contrast to other works of art and sculpture.[7] Described as "a piece of so-called sculpture" intended to honor Cogswell, Millard describes an incident in which a Cogswell statue was pulled down. He writes:

> Only those of a very limited knowledge of art approved of the statue, and few there were in wine-drinking San Francisco who would give countenance to its teetotalistic sentiment. One night a self-appointed committee of artists held an indignation meeting in which the statue, which was pronounced 'a defamation of the name of art,' was doomed to extinction. A stout rope was secured, the artists repaired to the foot of Bush Street, and there one of them climbed up to the sacred head of the philanthropist, took a couple of half-hitches around his neck…and a pull altogether, and poor Cogswell came off his tall pedestal… The affair made a good newspaper story, and interviews with leading art critics published at the time made it clear that in pulling down Mr. Cogswell the artists had done San Francisco a noble service.[8]

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[6] The title of this thesis also comes from this source. Bailey Millard, *History of the San Francisco Bay Region* (Chicago: American Historical Society, 1924), on SFPL Internet Archive, https://archive.org/details/historyofsanfran01mill/page/n11.

[7] Millard was a writer, magazine and newspaper editor, involved in publishing local writers in San Francisco. "Bailey Millard Dies," in *San Pedro News Pilot*, Vol. 14, Number 14, 21 March 1941; "Books of the Week and Literary Chat," in *San Francisco Call*, Vol. 87, Number 64, 3 August 1902. CDNC.

[8] Millard does not provide dates making it hard to say whether this was the same incident as the publicized lassoing of the Cogswell statue on Market and California Streets in January 1894. Millard describes this incident as having taken place at Market, Bush and Battery Streets. I think it is more likely Millard confused the intersections where the fountain was (a few block apart) rather than this referring to a different incident. *History of the San Francisco Bay Region*, 297.

This story sets the stage for a discussion of Cogswell's fountains. The statue being proclaimed a defamation of art by a group of artists or sometimes referred to as "a crowd of Bohemians," who tore down the statue with a rope under cover of darkness represents this act as charged with meaning.[9] While acknowledging the lighthearted humor and mockery this story offered, the roping of the Cogswell statue from its base was nonetheless depicted as a "noble service" to the city for rectifying an aesthetic or artistic wrong within public space. This event could not be dismissed as senseless drunken vandalism because the "wine-drinking" character of the city itself was at odds with Cogswell's "teetotalistic sentiment" embodied by his statue that offered viewers a glass of water.

While Cogswell was not unlike other reformers and philanthropists of his time who sought to impose their own middle-class ideals on others through their charity or public donations, his self-representation and hubris mixed with his temperance vision made his statues rather unpopular—or at least easily ostracized in the public by the press. In many ways, Cogswell's fountains were sites of struggle that represented processes of "cultural vandalism," or meaningful destruction, where disagreements over a shared regional identity and proper use of public space were played out.[10] Contestations against the Cogswell fountains and other monuments from this period reflect the extent to which monuments were tied to gendered and racialized discourses. In this case, popular historical narratives about San Francisco and California, largely disseminated by white

[9] "San Francisco's Most Eccentric Millionaire," *San Francisco Chronicle*, July 22, 1900, NewsBank: America's News – Historical and Current. https://infoweb-newsbank-com.ezproxy.sfpl.org/.
[10] Cultural vandalism, borrowed from Erika Doss, will be defined later. "The Elephant in the Room: Prejudicial Public Art and Cultural Vandalism," *De Arte* 53, no. 2–3 (September 2, 2018): 20.

middle-class men in the second half of the nineteenth century, codified a regional myth of exceptionalism, rooted in an essentialized Western character of the frontier and of rugged masculinity.[11] Artists and elites also produced an artistic or bohemian identity local to the San Francisco Bay Area. Other fountains and monuments erected around the same time as Cogswell's reflect such values and myths perpetuated within public space in contrast to Cogswell's self-monumentalizing. Analogous struggles over what should be represented by public monuments can be seen in other cities where such drinking fountains were donated, but the specificities of public reaction and debate in Cogswell's adopted home of San Francisco are the main focus of this thesis.

The criticism and mockery of Cogswell's drinking fountains can be read through numerous lenses—sensationalized journalism, vandalism, disdain for temperance in a city supposedly born out of 'frontier' rowdiness—making these fountains a valuable case-study for analyzing contestations over public space. I do not aim to create a comprehensive biographical portrait of Cogswell but rather interpret the discourse his fountains sparked in local newspapers regarding the role of pubic space in representing collective ideas or a sense of civic identity. Cogswell's fountains are significant in both local and national contexts because they reflect debates over reform and attempts to solidify hegemonic historic narratives. These issues were tied to changing gender roles and to the influence of xenophobia and imperialism in late nineteenth-century national politics. Furthermore, Cogswell's fountains highlight broader, transhistorical questions

[11] Brian Roberts, *American Alchemy: The California Gold Rush and Middle-Class Culture* (University of North Carolina Press: 2000), 15.

about the role of monuments and the built environment in provoking strong public feelings.

The widespread creation of monuments throughout the country at the end of the nineteenth and into the twentieth century is also significant for contextualizing Cogswell's fountains. This explosion of monuments was largely facilitated by their cheapening production and increasing commercialization.[12] Specializing in public art and memorials, Erika Doss calls this trend, from the 1870s to 1920s, "statue mania." Born out of post-war fragmentation, this mania was driven by anxieties surrounding national or state identity and collective coherence.[13] Municipalities and individuals commissioned statues and monuments to honor pioneers, soldiers, politicians, as well as countless other nationalistic values often associated with territorial expansion and colonization. As an area that was a relatively new addition to the nation in the latter half of the nineteenth century, San Francisco's local elites exemplified attempts to consolidate a sense of regional and civic identity that would fit into the larger nation. Though clearly illustrative of a monument craze, Cogswell's fountains frequently did not embody collective nationalistic or patriotic values as much as they commemorated Cogswell himself. While other statues and monuments erected in San Francisco around the same time do reflect attempts to embody both regional and nationalistic "American" values (e.g. commemorations of the Gold Rush, national wars, Manifest Destiny, capitalist enterprise, and so forth), Cogswell's fountains did not quite symbolize these hegemonic ideals

[12] Kirk Savage, *Monument Wars: Washington, D.C., the National Mall, and the Transformation of the Memorial Landscape* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009), 2.
[13] Erika Doss, *Memorial Mania*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012), 20.

because they represented Cogswell himself rather than collective feelings. Though he may have considered himself to be representative of collective values as a pioneer, philanthropist, and self-man millionaire, many who viewed Cogswell's fountains did not appreciate his monumentalizing.

Born in 1820 in Connecticut, Cogswell was essentially orphaned at a young age and left to make a living for himself. His story, an archetypal American narrative of hardship in youth, influenced Cogswell's later charity. Moving between factory and mill jobs, Cogswell gradually pursued an education. As a young adult, he worked in a school for a few years before studying dentistry.[14] By 1847, he was able to open his own dental practice in Pawtucket Rhode Island and married his wife Caroline around the same time.[15] He was inventive and a rather successful dentist, patenting a sort of vacuum seal for false teeth.[16] In 1849, Cogswell moved to California on his own (Caroline joined a few years later) and briefly operated a store in Stockton before moving to San Francisco.[17] In San Francisco, he opened a dental practice known for its golden tooth sign as many of the patients were miners who wanted gold fillings and teeth.[18] Cogswell quickly accumulated a fortune that afforded him the opportunity to become a philanthropist. Investing the money made from practicing dentistry in San Francisco, he

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[14] "San Francisco's Most Eccentric Millionaire," *SF Chronicle*, July 22, 1900.
[15] Ibid; Henry D. Cogswell Biographical Research Notes, by Everett E. Farwell [1959?], MS 690 , California Historical Society (CHS).
[16] "Cogswell, Henry Daniel," in *The National Cyclopaedia of American Biography,* Vol. VIII (New York, J. T. White company, 1900), 501-503. Page 502. http://archive.org/details/nationalcyclopae08newy.
[17] Cogswell Biographical Research Notes, MS 690, CHS; San Francisco's Most Eccentric Millionaire," *SF Chronicle*, July 22, 1900.
[18] Jones, "The Pioneer Prohibitionist," *SF Examiner,* February 7, 1925; [Dr. Henry Daniel Cogswell Historical Data compiled by Gerald D. Wright and Geneen Estrada, 1979] San Francisco Biography Collection, San Francisco Public Library (SFPL).

made a fortune through "judicious investment" in stocks and real estate at a moment of economic explosion in the San Francisco area.[19] He retired from practicing dentistry within seven years of arriving in the city having become a millionaire, enabling him to focus on his philanthropic work instead.[20]

In terms of Cogswell's biography, it is unclear how much of his personal history was self-fashioned or a product of self-flattery. On the other hand, he was not exactly favored by the local press and so newspaper sources did not often portray him in a positive light. Regardless of whether Cogswell was represented as merely lucky or genuinely hard-working, much of the biographical information on him presents the success story of a self-made man. As contemporaneous sources provide scant detail about Cogswell's life, he eludes clear characterization.[21] For example, in 1925 journalist Idwal Jones wrote that "posterity has forgotten Dr. Cogswell…He willed 100,000$ to be expended in publishing his biography written by himself. Yet there is hardly a line about him in the libraries."[22] Though Jones did not specify where Cogswell's self-made biography was published, Cogswell has a rather long entry in *the National Cyclopaedia of American Biography* from 1900, the year of his death.[23] This entry recounts that in his youth Cogswell constantly moved towns, changed jobs, and struggled to educate himself,

[19] "Mourn the Death of Dr. Cogswell," *San Francisco Call*, Vol. 87, Number 40, 10 July 1900; San Francisco Biography Collection, San Francisco Public Library; "San Francisco's Most Eccentric Millionaire," *SF Chronicle*, July 22, 1900.
[20] [Dr. Henry Daniel Cogswell Historical Data] San Francisco Biography Collection, San Francisco Public Library; *The National Cyclopaedia of American Biography*.
[21] Though Cogswell left many materials to the archive (his Time Capsule Collection at the CHS and his personal papers at the Bancroft Library), I think he remains somewhat enigmatic as the records and items he left behind do not necessarily provide a solid understanding of him.
[22] Jones, "The Pioneer Prohibitionist," *SF Examiner,* February 7, 1925.
[23] "Cogswell, Henry Daniel," *The National Cyclopaedia of American Biography.*

even including the anecdote that he walked over seventy-five miles to Pawtucket Rhode Island for work in a mill earning one dollar a week.[24] This entry also links Cogswell's philanthropy to a desire to help youths who also faced adversity and to benefit the public.

Cogswell's fountains must be understood within a wider context of reform movements as Cogswell donated them guided by the notion that the built environment had power over people and could produce societal reform—especially power to inspire temperance among San Franciscans. Though many social and political reforms were imagined and implemented the second half of the nineteenth century, temperance was one of the most popular and strongly underlined Cogswell's ambitions. Because the historiography around temperance has largely focused on the work of organizations, Cogswell seems somewhat anomalous in his individual efforts. Historians have addressed the multiple reasons temperance was popular in the nineteenth century, largely focusing on the successes (and sometimes failures) of groups and organizations such as the Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) and the anti-Saloon League.[25] Despite scholarship on organizations, notable individuals like Frances Willard of the WCTU or Carry Nation, who carried out "smashings" (i.e. destroying saloons with a hatchet) stand out in temperance history.[26]

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[24] Ibid, 502.
[25] For various "cycles" of reform and organizations see Jack S. Blocker, *American Temperance Movements: Cycles of Reform*, (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1989).
[26] See Carry A. Nation, *The Use and Need of the Life of Carry A. Nation*, (Topeka: F.M. Steves & Sons, 1909); Ruth Bordin, *Frances Willard: A Biography* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1986).

While notable temperance advocates are visible these histories, Cogswell is unique in that he seems to have operated largely independent of temperance organizations. Although he supported and allied himself with temperance causes and organizations, his fountains were not dedicated to any groups.[27] The lack of organizational backing or collective support that accompanied group reform efforts likely contributed to the criticism of Cogswell's fountains. However, the WCTU also erected numerous drinking fountains (dedicated to the organization) many of which "have been destroyed or relegated to obscurity."[28] While I believe Cogswell's individual self-commemorating contributed largely to his fountains' unpopularity, other temperance fountains have not fared well over time, reflecting shifts away from temperance values in the twentieth century and the changeability of public spaces.

Furthermore, Cogswell stands as a fascinating example of the varied nature of temperance advocacy in the nineteenth century. Historian Jack Blocker has rightly argued it is more accurate for historians to characterize the temperance movement as "multiple temperance movements not just one monolith," stressing that no single movement existed but rather many different organizations and activities emerged, dedicated to the common cause of reducing or altogether eradicating alcohol consumption.[29] Furthermore, historians who study temperance, or reform movements more broadly, have recognized the central role of women in the nineteenth century to these movements for change.

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[27] Both his time capsule collection at the CHS and his personal papers at the Bancroft Library include brochures, programs, and other ephemera related to temperance events and organizations.
[28] Carol Mattingly, "Woman's Temple, Women's Fountains: The Erasure of Public Memory," *American Studies* 49, no. 3/4 (2008): 140. https://www.jstor.org/stable/40930400.
[29] Blocker, *American Temperance Movements,* xi.

Especially in the second half of the century, largely middle-class white women became increasingly involved in the temperance movement alongside a growing women's suffrage movement.[30] Cogswell's temperance activities then fall somewhat outside of the focus of much scholarship on temperance even as he reflects deeply gendered dynamics relating to social reform movements.

With women exerting greater roles in society as reformers, conceptions of gendered roles and cultural values changed during the second half of the late nineteenth century. Scholars have explored the work of women and cultural conceptions of femininity in driving reform, as well as changing constructions of masculinity or manhood. While middle-class Victorian men may have embodied more sentimental ideals of even-temperament, restraint, and sensibility, towards the end of the century many of these ideals changed in favor of a more virile masculinity. Such changing gender ideals have been described as a "masculinity crisis" brought on by anxieties over the increasing role of women reformers, asserting a defense of masculinity requiring a stronger separation between roles and values deemed masculine or feminine.[31] White middle-class anxieties around race and the supposed character or strength of the nation (embodied through manliness) were central to this "crisis."

Though the idea of a masculinity crisis around the turn of the century has been rejected by many cultural critics, Cogswell fit within this moment of white bourgeois concerns over divisions of gendered roles overlapping with racial anxieties. Historian

[30]Jed Dannenbaum, "The Origins of Temperance Activism and Militancy among American Women," *Journal of Social History* 15, no. 2 (1981): 238. www.jstor.org/stable/3787109.
[31] Joe Dubbert, "11: Progressivism and the Masculinity Crisis," in *The American Man,* eds. Pleck and Pleck (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1980*),* 303-320.

Gail Bederman insists the "remaking" of white, middle-class manhood is a more appropriate characterization than "crisis" because gender is an ideological, "dynamic and always changing" cultural process that shifts rather than ruptures.[32] She argues the shift away from Victorian self-restrained, self-made manliness with a strong moral character to one of rougher, physical virility and strength was deeply connected to discourses of race, empire, and civilization.[33] In other words, fears of "overcivilized" manliness, characterized by the self-restrained Victorian ideal, produced anxieties over weakness and supposedly effeminacy resulting in a white, middle-class remaking that paradoxically stressed a sense of active, primal, even violent physical strength combined with civilized, moral fortitude.[34]

The gendered and raced discourses Bederman explores in her foundational book, *Manliness & Civilization,* are central to the context of public space in late-nineteenth century San Francisco. Gendered discourses also shaped nineteenth century reform and disciplinary policies through sentiment and affective appeals to morality.[35] These

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[32] Gail Bederman, *Manliness & Civilization: A Cultural History of Gender and Race in the United States, 1880-1917* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 6-7.
[33] Ibid, 11-15.
[34] Neurasthenia was the diagnosis given to the anxiety over overcivilized manliness "when white men, with highly evolved white bodies, overspent their scarce nervous forces on the enervating activities of civilization…only white men could lead civilization to ever higher stages; yet civilization weakened white men's bodies and drained them of their scarce nerve force." Ibid 118-119. This assertion of white superiority and "civilization" while denouncing overcivilized weakness was also connected to turn of the century pseudo-scientific evolutionary ideas and white fears of race war and race suicide as on pages 196-206 on Teddy Roosevelt.
[35] For more on this topic see: Nicola Kay Beisel, *Imperiled Innocents: Anthony Comstock and Family Reproduction in Victorian America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997); Shirley Samuels, *The Culture of Sentiment: Race, Gender, and Sentimentality in 19th-Century America* (New York: Oxford University Press, Incorporated, 1992); and Kyla Schuller, *The Biopolitics of Feeling: Race, Sex, and Science in the Nineteenth Century* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2018).

historiographical threads are foundational to understanding the reactions that arose surrounding Cogswell fountains as shifting conceptions of masculinity played into press descriptions of Cogswell represented as a more sentimental, reformist ideal of manhood.[36] Additionally, debate over what kinds of values should be represented within public space, illustrated by other monuments, were related to these gendered discourses of civilization, race, and empire.

The Cogswell statues that topped many of his fountains are central to understanding the humorous controversy that these monuments attracted. Although not every Cogswell fountain or monument had Cogswell on top, those that did depicted a well-dressed man holding out a glass of water in one hand and a sort of scroll representing the temperance pledge in the other (fig. 5). The fountains were often surrounded by four ornate lampposts featuring stars and a crown motif similar to those on his tomb (figures 2 and 6). In 1893, a *San Francisco Call* article described the sordid state three Cogswell fountains had fallen into due to vandalism and neglect—all three initially topped with a bronze Cogswell donated around ten years prior. The neglect these fountains suffered included being vandalized by young boys and the surrounding lamp posts being bumped into by beer-carts. The uncredited author of the article, whose tone subtly mocks Cogswell throughout, continued to describe Cogswell's account of how these statues came to be cast in his likeness:

> While admitting that he has perpetuated himself …in sowing the seeds of temperance, yet his presence on the statues is the result of a fond conspiracy.

[36] One article providing biographical background on Cogswell described him as "slender and somewhat feeble as a boy," and "a delicate little fellow." "San Francisco's Most Eccentric Millionaire," *SF Chronicle*, July 22 1900.

> In ordering the statues he told the artist to make a fine healthy-looking man of benevolent appearance, with his right foot forward and the [temperance] pledge in his hand.
>
> Not until three months after the works of art were completed did the doctor inspect one, and then he was horrified to discover that the artist had cast the figures of his patron.[38]

According to this article, the fact that Cogswell's statues resembled himself was merely an accidental misunderstanding that could not be undone once they had been cast. The tone of this article, calling the mistake a "fond conspiracy," highlights the author's dubiousness of Cogswell's defense which may have been shared by readers. The "benevolent appearance" of the statues reinforced Cogswell's sentimental ideal of manhood. This article also depicted humorous illustrations of the statues coming alive to express frustration with the city's ingratitude (fig.7).

News reports like this one, both poking fun at Cogswell while highlighting the city's ingratitude and shameful behavior towards Cogswell's gift are numerous and characterize debates over reform, monuments, aesthetic tastes, and public space in San Francisco at the time. Cogswell's monuments were so unpopular and ridiculed because they embodied Cogswell himself, and his individual temperance mission, rather than collective ideals. Cogswell represented a specific brand of upper-class, respectable and moralizing sentimental manhood, while the newly forged public vision of San Francisco was a hyper-masculine, frontier ideal that romanticized Gold Rush mythology and values. Despite Cogswell's experience as a "pioneer," "forty-niner," or self-made millionaire, the

[38] "HIS SOUL WAS SAD," *San Francisco Call*, Volume 73, Number 92, 2 March 1893, Page 8, CDNC, Center for Bibliographic Studies and Research, University of California, Riverside.

temperance vision and aesthetic choices represented in his fountains often offended the public.

Cogswell's fountains may be interpreted as a failure to encapsulate a sense of public identity or shared cultural values—even if such values were greatly contested. In California, the notion of a hegemonic, official regional identity or historical narrative within the American nation and visible within public space only came into being in the second half of the nineteenth century post-statehood. Tied to the formative myth of the Gold Rush, city elites attempted to create an identity tied to racialized violence and gendered notions of the "frontier" as masculine. Another substrata of regional identity was that of a liberated, artistic and creative center. Yet in contrast to the notion of San Francisco as a city of endless opportunity and freedom, scholarship exists on the city's development as very much tied to hegemonic constructions of class, race, gender and maintaining divisions among those lines.[40] Such complexities and debates over regional identity were played out in the public sphere contemporaneously with Cogswell's fountains.

Both Cogswell and the monuments he erected represented shifts in broader cultural values and constructions surrounding masculinity, success, philanthropy, art, and collective identities—and how those were manifested in conceptions of public space. In

[40] Barbara Berglund, *Making San Francisco American: Cultural Frontiers in the Urban West, 1946-1906.* (Lawrence: University Press Of Kansas, 2010); Brian Roberts, *American Alchemy: The California Gold Rush and Middle-Class Culture*. Also see the following articles from *California History* Volume 79, no. 2 (2000): J. A. Sandos, "'Because He Is a Liar and a Thief': Conquering the Residents of 'Old' California, 1850-1880," pages 86–112, https://doi.org/10.2307/25463689; and Sucheng Chan, "A People of Exceptional Character: Ethnic Diversity, Nativism, and Racism in the California Gold Rush," pages 44–85, https://doi.org/10.2307/25463688.

the localized context of San Francisco, different monuments and their reception reflect multiple, contesting attempts to solidify an urban identity within a regional, Californian one. Negative reception of Cogswell's fountains elsewhere similarly reflects negotiations of public space and ownership in an era of increasing philanthropy and commemoration within the built environment. Debates over aesthetics and an emerging sense of regional identity also reflect the extent to which processes of civic identity formation were gendered and sought to exemplify a specific masculine ideal Cogswell failed to embody himself.

The often-gendered discourses of reform and temperance were also tied to debates over public space in a broader context as the creation of many public spaces in the nineteenth century and later were very much indebted to reform movements. City planners and proponents of urban parks in the nineteenth century often identified as reformers who sought to fix social ills or improve society through a modification of the built environment. Landscape historian David Schuyler writes, planners like Olmsted or Vaux, who were most famous for designing New York's Central Park, "attempted to create landscapes that they hoped would promote the highest potential of civilization in America."[41] Despite the problems and criticism to be made about middle-class planners deciding the moral and environmental ideals of urban spaces, they undoubtedly shaped the built environment of many cities.

[41] David Schuyler, *The New Urban Landscape: The Redefinition of City Form in Nineteenth-Century America* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986), 6.

The idea that the built environment has the power to produce or incite wider social change was at the heart of Cogswell's quest to eradicate intemperance through drinking fountains. As he told a *San Francisco Call* reporter, "I do not believe in people being compelled… to go into a saloon to slake their thirst. In every city of the Old World I saw fountains dotted about, and particularly to the poor I believe them to be a necessity."[42] As seen in this statement, temperance reform was deeply tied to philanthropic rhetoric of aiding the poor, providing public access to clean water and touting modernity in comparison to the "Old World."[43] Because these fountains provided a fairly uncontroversial need for public drinking water, resistance to Cogswell fountains reflects debates over public space and the built environment were not utilitarian ones but more about symbolic meaning. The resistance to Cogswell's fountains was related to a variety of contested meanings symbolized by Cogswell himself, temperance reform, and aesthetic sensibilities.

Contestations over public space were not limited to nineteenth century San Francisco and reflect a wider change in conceptions of shared, public spaces. It should be acknowledged that the making of "public space" around the turn of the century was very much tied to reform movements and not always representative of local publics and communities. Though with earlier roots, urban design and planning around the turn of the century largely entailed the imposition of white middle-class values and conceptions of improvement or beautification on the built environment. Historian Kirk Savage discusses

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[42]" IMAGE BREAKERS," in the *SF Call*, Volume 75, Number 34, 3 January 1894.
[43] Cogswell and Caroline travelled the World for a few years in the early 1870s. Dr. HDC Historical Data, San Francisco Biography Collection, SFPL; "Cogswell, Henry Daniel," *The National Cyclopaedia of American Biography,* 502.

how the shift from the nineteenth century concept of public grounds to twentieth century public space was "a process of modernization," signifying not merely a shared area but one "made subject to modern systems of control and design."[44] As Savage describes in the case of Washington D.C., the making of public space entailed the destruction of diverse landscapes to create space for a unified design, limited not just to natural environments but also the numerous, haphazardness statues "that dotted the public grounds and streets" and which came to signify a lack of cohesion or planning in the early twentieth century.[45]

While Cogswell's fountain in Washington D.C. has stood the test of time, many in San Francisco did not. Not only did individuals compete for public space in urban areas, they also competed with local planners and city governments. The making and contestation of public space, then, should not be regarded merely as one of ordinary inhabitants in a city but rather a process largely determined by local elites. Furthermore, the idea that city planning and the built environment could be used to control or monitor behavior was connected to middle-class reformist ideas. Many examples I focus on display a top-down impetus to promote hegemonic ideals through monuments, yet the making of urban space has been more complex.[46] The opposition to Cogswell's fountains

[44] Savage, *Monument Wars,* 13-14.
[45] Ibid, 15.
[46] For more exhaustive histories of the making of urban, public space in San Francisco see: James Brook et al., eds., *Reclaiming San Francisco: History, Politics, Culture: A City Lights Anthology* (San Francisco, Calif: City Lights Books, 1998); Philip J. Ethington, *The Public City: The Political Construction of Urban Life in San Francisco, 1850-1900* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994); Mary P. Ryan, *Civic Wars: Democracy and Public Life in the American City during the Nineteenth Century* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997). For a more general history, see Swati Chattopadhyay, Jeremy White, and Mary P. Ryan, eds., *City Halls and Civic Materialism: Towards a Global History of Urban Public Space* (New York: Routledge, 2014).

was just one example of how different publics and groups contested and negotiated the use of shared spaces outside official channels. Control of the built environment and who occupies prized public spaces was, and continues to be, at the heart of discourse surrounding monuments.

Lastly, I frame Cogswell fountains within more contemporary scholarship on monuments and vandalism combined with regional histories of post-statehood San Francisco to situate the mockery of Cogswell's monuments as reflective of multiple cultural concerns not just as anecdotal headlines. Drawing on Erika Doss's work on monuments and public art, reactions to Cogswell's fountains reflect complex ways that local middle-class and elite groups were bolstering a regional, San Franciscan identity and also inform wider discussions on the symbolic role of monuments in the built environment. Vandalism of these fountains also represented how public spaces were negotiated.

Scholarship on monuments and public memory often center on larger national identity and trends rather than smaller, more localized contexts.[47] Furthermore, in many studies on American history, eastern cities are often the focal point for studying the nation as a whole. Examining San Francisco in its own right complicates such limited views. Though national trends, like "statue mania" and its underlying anxieties were visible in San Francisco, this specific regional context is worthy of focus as it reflects peculiarities and specificities within that larger narrative. Furthermore, much

[47] See Kirk Savage, *Monument Wars* and John Bodnar, *Remaking America: Public Memory, Commemoration, and Patriotism in the Twentieth Century* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton Univ. Press, 1994).

contemporary discussion around monuments is centered on memory and how monuments represent the past. While Cogswell's fountains clearly reflected a hope to be remembered in perpetuity, his fountains were arguably more concerned with his own present and futurity rather than commemorating a collective past, making them somewhat unique.

Work on vandalism, iconoclasm, and public art, with some exceptions, tends to be focused through an aesthetic or art historical lens more than through the lens of cultural history.[48] Though disciplinary borders are arguably arbitrary, discussions of iconoclasm in aesthetic philosophical debates do not easily lend themselves to nineteenth-century print media's facetious framing of Cogswell statues as sites of iconoclasm. I suggest viewing iconoclasm and vandalism in a broader cultural sense, as a symbolically charged act of resistance through defacing or destructing art and monuments.

I rely mainly on local newspapers for the sources of this paper—and by extension—to exemplify public debates over the Cogswell fountains. However, it should be acknowledged that although print media did, and still do, not necessarily capture the sentiments of all the diverse inhabitants of late-nineteenth century San Francisco, they are nonetheless valuable sources for gaging public concerns. In her study of nineteenth century American cities, *Civic Wars*, historian Mary Ryan writes:

> As the printed nexus of an extended, multivoiced conversation the newspaper may be as close as historians can get to the voice of the public. This is not to say that these published records speak of the people any more accurately and authentically than does any other species of historical document. At the same time newspapers

[48] For more on iconoclasm, see Alain Besançon, *The Forbidden Image: An Intellectual History of Iconoclasm* (Chicago, Ill: University of Chicago Press, 2009); Alfred Gell, *Art and Agency: An Anthropological Theory* (Oxford ; New York: Clarendon Press, 1998); Michael Kelly, *Iconoclasm in Aesthetics* (Cambridge, UK ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

> and published records supply an admirably complete empirical record of local events and public actions.[49]

Acknowledging few historical sources are fully representative of all, newspapers recorded local events and conversations around them, such as the lassoing of Cogswell's fountain. The newspapers I use reflect sensationalizing and exaggerating, though because Cogswell and his fountains were consistently a subject of coverage, I consider them valuable sources. I interpret the frequency of Cogswell fountains in print as reflective of a sort demand or interest in him and his philanthropy.

Regardless of which San Franciscan publics certain papers represented, even people who did not read the newspapers I cite would likely have at least been familiar with Cogswell's fountains because of their fairly central locations. Furthermore, news and other print media may be considered as representing part of a broader public sphere more than representative of an overall public. With the understanding that an overall public is too capacious of a category to ever be representative of everyone in a given place aand time, the notion of a public sphere or multiple publics is more appropriate. As Philip Ethington writes in his study of San Francisco in the second half of the nineteenth century, "the greatest organ of the public sphere was the press" in that the city had one of the highest newspaper circulation rates in the country.[50] Because newspapers were such

[49] Mary P. Ryan, *Civic Wars: Democracy and Public Life in the American City during the Nineteenth Century,* 13.

[50] Whether print media reflected larger public interest or the interests of those who owned and published papers is beyond the scope of this paper. However; Ethington provides a thorough study of public life in San Francisco post-statehood and discusses the public sphere and print culture. Philip J. Ethington, *The Public City: The Political Construction of Urban Life in San Francisco, 1850-1900*, 19-21.

an important facet of public life and discourse in late nineteenth-century San Francisco, they may be considered representative of debates and public concern.

Just as print media are valuable though imperfect sources to measure conversations and debates in a given historic moment, the term "public" is also problematic and requires clarification. While I use the terms "public" debate, reaction, discourse, and so on, it is more appropriate to think in terms of "publics" as discussed by theorist Michael Warner, than of a totalizing "public." In defining publics, Warner writes "The peculiar character of *a* public is that it is a space of discourse organized by discourse."[51] For the purposes of this thesis, we may think in terms of multiple publics in discussing public debate or reactions to monuments. Readers of the *Alta California* newspaper may have been a public, just as those who vandalized Cogswell's statue, or those who merely viewed and commented on those statues in passing were another public. The "public" I refer to then is more of an amalgam of multiple publics that participated in and were bound by the discourses of monuments and fountains within public space, specifically those erected by H.D. Cogswell.

Cogswell's Intentions

While Cogswell's monuments and the discourse they inspired are the focus of this paper, it is important to acknowledge his perspective in erecting his fountains. An undated letter, from sometime before or around 1879, from Cogswell to the San Francisco Board of Supervisors reflect some of Cogswell's concerns motivating his

[51] Michael Warner, *Publics and Counterpublics* (New York: Zone Books, 2002), 68.

philanthropy. This letter was a follow up to Cogswell's request to erect a fountain at the intersection of Kearny Street and Montgomery Avenue.[52] He was granted the "privilege of erecting at my own expense a Polished Granite Drinking Fountain to be surmounted by the Bronze Figure of a Rustic Boy, total Height 16 1/2 feet," though the construction of an awning over it was deferred.[53] The importance of building a roof, he claimed, was to "shelter some boy" and provide a place to sell "small wares." Cogswell championed his proposed fountain as an opportunity to afford a poor youth an "honest living without begging." It is unclear what Cogswell meant by "rustic boy," presumably modest but also white and rural—perhaps a nod to Cogswell's Northern pre-Civil War childhood or intended to contrast with the increasingly urban environment and large immigrant population in San Francisco.[54] Cogswell's intentions for the proposed this fountain were very clear—to provide relief and comfort to an individual youth in need. In this instance, his fountain would not only provide shelter but a means of economic opportunity and improvement. In the letter to the city supervisors, Cogswell asserted that if a boy was able to sell wares at the fountain, he may become "self-reliant and an example to other boys who are begging, stealing, breaking windows and a terror to good citizens" or "idle

[52] This statue was eventually moved to Washington Square. The initial location at Montgomery Avenue is not to be confused with Montgomery Street. Montgomery Avenue is now Columbus Avenue.
[53] [Box 1 Folder 18, Letters Regarding Cogswell's Proposition to Erect a Drinking Fountain], HDC Time Capsule Collection, MS 559, CHS.
[54] According to Barbara Berglund, "Census figures for 1870,1880, and 1890 showed that San Francisco had a higher percentage of foreign-born residents than any other major American city during these decades" with the exception of three Massachusetts mill towns that had large immigrant work forces. It should also be noted that other ethnic groups (such as Mexican-Californians, Native Californians, African-Americans, and Chinese-Americans) figured into the city's diverse population but not these statistics. In *Making San Francisco American: Cultural Frontiers in the Urban West, 1946-1906*, 4-5.

and dissolute life and habits."[55] In this letter, Cogswell had ambitious hopes for the ability of his fountain to uplift the poor.

Cogswell's vision of uplifting a poor boy was in line with the Gilded-era myth or Horatio Alger narrative of self-reliance and improvement, possibly with the help of a friendly, older benefactor.[56] As seen in his letter, he wanted to provide shelter and clean water but also a chance of economic productivity. In this vein, charity assumes participation within the capitalist marketplace as its end goal, becoming an example of what hard work can bring for other members of society. Cogswell's description of idle, dissolute acts perpetrated by "other boys" sets a moralizing tone separating them from hardworking and economically productive "good citizens." The characterization of street boys as dissolute aligns with the "discourse of 'the dangerous classes,'" in which middle-class writers and readers cast urban poor children as both symbolic of alarming social ills yet also subjects of desire, discussed by literary critic Michael Moon in analyzing Alger's fiction.[57] Moon describes the seeming contradiction of street children as both repulsive or threatening but also attractive, clearly embodied by Cogswell's sentimental middle-class rhetoric. In his letter, Cogswell cast poor street children as unscrupulous and potentially criminal but also honest and exemplary of hard-work. Cogswell's philanthropic vision was then a common one—in which ideas of what is proper and productive behavior are

[55] [Box 1 Folder 18 Letters Regarding Cogswell's Proposition to Erect a Drinking Fountain], HDC Time Capsule Collection, MS 559, CHS, page 2.
[56] For more see Glenn Hendler, "Pandering in the Public Sphere: Masculinity and the Market in Horatio Alger," in *Public Sentiments* (Chapel Hill: UNC Press, 2001). As Michael Moon points out, contrary to popular misconceptions of Alger's stories, the lesson of his stories is more often "genteel patronage and sheer luck" lead to wealth rather than "'rugged' and competitive individualism," in "The Gentle Boy from the Dangerous Classes," *Representations*, no. 19 (1987): 89. DOI: 10.2307/2928532.
[57] Michael Moon, "The Gentle Boy from the Dangerous Classes," 92.

expected or exchanged for aid and generosity. This narrative of a neglected but hardworking boy who is able to eventually succeed through capitalist self-enterprising mirrored Cogswell's own story. With his proposed monument to a "rustic boy" it is impossible to ignore a sort of self-monumentalizing and self-congratulatory impulse underlying this philanthropic or reforming act that also embodied an American myth of the self-made man.

Ultimately, the fountain erected at the intersection of Kearny and Montgomery by Dr. Cogswell was topped with a statue of Ben Franklin in 1879 (fig.8-9).[58] Though a monument to a great man in the nation's history rather than an anonymous rustic boy, this design represented a similar ideal alongside Cogswell's dedication to children. Franklin, also from a modest background, embodied the narrative of hard-work and self-reliance leading to success. Franklin symbolizes a mix of Revolutionary-era patriotism and Enlightenment-era innovation, while his *Autobiography* shows "the influence of his Puritan predecessors" by extolling the virtues of "industry and thrift and temperance."[59] Such values were clearly shared by Cogswell despite his philanthropic spending, and some articles called attention to his "Puritan thrift" to imply miserly habits.[60] Cogswell's Franklin fountain was moral and didactic, commemorating Franklin as a historic figure but also a model of upright behavior and self-enterprising in mythic proportions.

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[58] "The New Fountain," in *Daily Alta California*, Volume 31, Number 10651, 11 June 1879, CDNC.
[59] Peter Conn and Amy Gutmann, "Introduction" to Benjamín Franklin, *The Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin: Penn Reading Project Edition* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005), 3.
[60] "San Francisco's Most Eccentric Millionaire," *San Francisco Chronicle*, July 22, 1900.

Though this fountain was not topped with a statue of Cogswell himself, it may still be interpreted as self-representative as Cogswell must have held Franklin's ideas and values in high esteem. It is clear this fountain lasted because it depicted Franklin, "which no one would dare to desecrate," rather than Cogswell.[61] This statue was the first erected by Cogswell and was initially well-received. However, as one *San Francisco Chronicle* article later pointed out, "he grew jealous of the old philosopher and did not see why one who was so willing to benefit mankind as he, himself, was not as good a subject for a statue…Just here the trouble commenced for the vain dentist."[62] This depiction of Cogswell, as jealous of Franklin, though surely unflattering draws attention to a common perception of him, at least in the press, as narcissistic and too ready to commemorate himself among the ranks of other great men from history. Furthermore, the Franklin statue marked the first in the series of fountains Cogswell erected in the city.

The Franklin fountain's base was inscribed: "Presented by H.D. Cogswell to our boys and girls who will soon take our places and pass on" and "Welcome." The fountain had three faucets on the sides of the base to dispense different types of water—"Vichy," "Congress," and "California Seltzer" and included a time capsule to be opened in 1979.[64] The *Daily Alta California* reported that dedication ceremony on June 15, 1879, including a prayer, short speeches, a live band, and undraping of the statue was attended by a

[61] Ibid.
[62] Ibid.
[64] "The New Fountain," *Daily Alta California*, Vol. 31, Number 10651, June 11 1879; Cogswell Time Capsule Collection, CHS.

"Great Crowd."[65] While it may not have been topped with the rustic boy as intended in his letter, Cogswell gifted the fountain to the young. Motivated by a sense of obligation children and posterity, the time capsule reflected Cogswell's deep concern with a continuing legacy and desire to preserve the contemporary moment he lived in.

The time capsule was opened one-hundred years later in 1979 and contained numerous items: national periodicals like *Leslie's* and *Harper's*, local foreign-language newspapers, California's state constitution, temperance leaflets, advertisements, business cards, city documents, pamphlets, letters, photo souvenirs, coins, and so on.[66] While not comprehensive of Cogswell's psyche, as I do not attempt to fully grasp his personal motives, I think his letter and the Franklin fountain itself provide some understanding of his intentions. Despite self-congratulatory moralizing, the Franklin fountain reflects Cogswell's relatively selfless motives of providing refreshment and moral guidance in erecting fountains. This attempt to preserve a glimpse of the 1870s for posterity also aligned with Cogswell's concern for children and future generations. In addition to fountains and creating a school, Cogswell created funds for students in need, a women's home, and his own philanthropic society.[67] Hoping to provide relief, comfort, education

[65] Cogswell, who claimed not to be an orator, did not give a speech but encouraged the audience to have a drink. "The Cogswell Fountain," *Daily Alta California* 15 June 1879, CDNC, accessed October 16, 2019, https://cdnc.ucr.edu/?a=d&d=DAC18790615.2.47&srpos=1&e=01-06-1879-30-06-1879--en--20-DAC-1--txt-txIN-Franklin+fountain+-------1.

[66] The contents of the time capsule opened in 1979 are preserved at the California Historical Society (HDC Time Capsule Collection). Nick Yablon's book, *Remembrance of Things Present: The Invention of the Time Capsule,* provides a history of the time capsule in American culture with Chapter 2 focused on Cogswell's.

[67] "MOURN THE DEATH OF DR. COGSWELL," *SF Call* Vol. 87, Number 40, 10 July 1900.

or inspiration to the young and poor seems to have inspired most of Cogswell's fountains and philanthropy.

Fountains and their Reception

Perhaps the most public and sensational story regarding the Cogswell fountains was the removal of the statue at California, Market, and Drumm Streets in San Francisco in 1894. A *San Francisco Call* article titled "Image Breakers" from January 3, 1894 described the events providing illustrations of the toppled statue (fig.10). The report read:

> Some iconoclastic spirits, probably made bold by too freely indulging in the convivialities of New Year's day, found vent for their destructive proclivities in the small hours of the morning yesterday. With the greatest deliberation, apparently, a rope was coiled around the mock presentment of Dr. Cogswell and with a strong pull, and all together, he was toppled from his fountain pedestal.[69]

This act allegedly bore no witnesses and resulted in the statue's head, arms, and legs breaking. The theatricality of this event is impossible to ignore and enhanced by the reporter's language. Referring to the statue's vandals as "iconoclastic spirits," whose insults were compounded by assumed intoxication, implies the targeted nature of this event. Not merely a senseless act of drunken vandalism, the reporter represented the act as one of iconoclasm. This instance of the Cogswell statue's removal, which I will discuss and return to throughout, signifies a variety of meanings and reactions to public monuments. Characterizing the act as deliberate and iconoclastic shows the monument itself as the target of public, or at least a small group's disdain.

[69] "IMAGE BREAKERS," in *SF Call*, Volume 75, Number 34, 3 January 1894. Page 8. CDNC.

In 1925, a column in the *San Francisco Examiner* titled "Rediscovering San Francisco" that featured small articles on the city's past also used the language of iconoclasm in recounting the efforts of the "Pioneer Prohibitionist" Cogswell. The columnist Idwal Jones wrote how in the "Fall of 1895 a group of artists singing the 'Marseillaise' marched from Coppa's restaurant" to Bush and Battery where they "lassoed" a Cogswell statue to the ground.[70] These local artists were also described as "iconoclasts" who "chanted of the exploit afterwards in deathless verse." The bohemian or artistic character of the vandals reinforced the notion that the city was an artistic center, which will be discussed more later. The incident described here, bears a striking resemblance to the 1894 lassoing of the Cogswell statue at Market and California, and it is possible the author confounded the dates and location.[71] In any case, that the group was coming from Coppa's is significant as it was known as an artists' meeting place in the 1890s.[72] Additionally, the singing of the French national anthem—whether reality or embellishment—adds to the iconoclastic dimensions of this vandalism by invoking a sense of revolutionary zeal or justice. Though again, adding a humorous component to the defacement of these statues, frame this joke as a political, aesthetic, or meaningful act.

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[70] Idwal Jones, "Pioneer Prohibitionist," February 7, 1925, *SF Examiner.*
[71] This intersection is a few blocks away from California, Drumm and Market. I think it is unlikely these were separate events as I could not find any newspaper articles from the fall of 1895 mentioning this incident. Also as early as 1893, this intersection was already willed/ being considered as the future site for the Donahue Fountain, "IN AND ABOUT TOWN.," *San Francisco Call*, June 2, 1893, California Digital Newspaper Collection. Bailey Millard's *History of the San Francisco Bay Region* also named the intersection of Market, Bush and Battery, though he included no date.
[72] Birgitta Hjalmarson, *Artful Players: Artistic Life in Early San Francisco* (Los Angeles: Balcony Press, 1999), 177-178.

Erika Doss has termed the process "cultural vandalism" in which "affective dimensions guide both the making and the unmaking—the defacing, destruction, and removal…of public art."[73] In other words, monuments' creation of affect or incitement of public feelings translate into their reception which may result in their "unmaking." While Doss focuses on contemporary examples of art considered prejudicial or offensive, the defacement of Cogswell's statue may be read within this affective framework of cultural vandalism. Through this lens, vandalism is tied to a sense of collective feeling that may be used to justify defacement and destruction of public monuments. Characterizing Cogswell's statue toppling as an act of iconoclasm or cultural vandalism highlights public discourse and debates over meaning in the realm of public space in late nineteenth-century San Francisco. The Cogswell statue that topped many of his fountains, their perceived ugliness and moralizing sentiment of temperance (or Cogswell himself), were the source of enough negative public feeling to guide their destruction and prevent their reconstruction.

In the *San Francisco Call* article "Image Breakers" from January 3, 1894 referenced above, both Cogswell and his attorney, W.T. Baggett, voiced a sense of disappointment that the statue was torn down. For both, this event was illustrative of the press or critics' lack of appreciation for a useful and well-intentioned fountain. Cogswell apparently reacted "cooly" to the news, perhaps jaded by then. In claiming he unsuccessfully "tried to benefit the city and the class in which I am particularly

[73] Doss discusses contemporary examples of prejudicial public art that may be considered racist, colonialist, or oppressive such as monuments to Confederate soldiers, Christopher Columbus, etc. Erika Doss, "The Elephant in the Room: Prejudicial Public Art and Cultural Vandalism," *De Arte* 53, no. 2–3 (September 2, 2018): 20.

interested—the very poor," Cogswell emphasized the numerous philanthropic acts he had done for the city. Baggett expressed dismay stating:

> If the figure in any way detracted from the utility of the gift there might be room for cavil… although, in all, he has erected about twenty-five fountains in different cities of the United States, only in San Francisco has he been made the more or less constant butt of people who know little or nothing regarding the aims he has had in view.[74]

This statement reflected the idea that the statue of Cogswell did not impede the fountain's primary function and was therefore not a valid reason to despise it overall. Baggett's view denies the "affective dimensions"—or feelings of disdain, resentment, and so forth—the statue may have produced and focuses solely on the utilitarian and well-intentioned nature of the fountain. This quotation also highlights a perceived exceptionalism in San Francisco's populace that lent itself to such iconoclastic behavior. The collective view held by the city's inhabitants, reflected in the press, was that the function or intentions of the fountain were not as important as the feelings of "cavil" or disdain.

Contrary to Baggett's assessment, San Francisco was not the only place where Cogswell's fountains were the butt of a joke, as many news stories reflect negative reception to such monuments elsewhere; nor was it the only place where such monuments were vandalized or became the subject of general civic disfavor. In 1885, the *Daily Alta California* reprinted an article from the *Providence Star* titled "A Specimen of

[74] "Image Breakers," *San Francisco Call*, January 3, 1894, California Digital Newspaper Collection, https://cdnc.ucr.edu/?a=d&d=SFC18940103.2.110&srpos=2&e=--1894---1894--en--20--1--txt-txIN-%22cogswell%22+and+%22fountain%22-------1.

Hideousness" reporting the removal of the Cogswell fountain in Rochester, New York and hoping for the same outcome in Boston and Pawtucket.[75] A year earlier, another article printed in the *Daily Alta California* related Mark Twain's reaction to the Rochester fountain. Upon learning he was looking at a "Cogswell fountain" made of monumental bronze, Twain responded:

> It isn't half too monumental…as the brass of the donor. I don't feel like interfering in a matter of this kind—purely local, you know—but I would like to advise the citizens to turn out and mob the statue, to get even. The man looks as if he had been nine days drowned. It has a putrid, decomposed sort of a look that is offensive to a delicate organism. The only redeeming feature about the doctor, if that is true to life, is his legs...I would cut that statue off just below the coat skirt and throw the top part into the canal where the water is deepest and the mud in the bottom softest.[76]

Nearly ten years before Cogswell's statue was toppled in San Francisco, Twain urged the people of Rochester to do the same. Not only did he comment on the donor's "brass," or sense of self-importance, he deemed the statues offensive to even look at. The sense that the statue was so hideous as to warrant being tossed in the canal reflects the extent to which such aesthetic offenses may have translated into deeds of vandalism and destruction. While Twain is known for his humor, the outrageous appearance of the fountains was not lost on critics beyond San Francisco and surely sparked debate. The removal of the Rochester fountain in 1885 was testament to the fact that Twain was not the only person to oppose its presence. In Rochester as in San Francisco, the affect

[75] "A Specimen of Hideousness," in the *Daily Alta California*, Volume 38, Number 12811, 11 May 1885, CDNC.
[76] "Mark Twain, The Famous Humorist Interviewed at Rochester, The Cogswell Fountains" *Daily Alta Californi*a, Vol. 37, Number 12669, 20 December 1884, CDNC.

Cogswell's fountains incited or public feelings they produced was largely one of animosity that guided their removal rather than good will inspiring temperance.

Cogswell's donations to Washington, D.C. and Tompkins Square Park in New York City were not topped with a statue of himself, which is likely the reason they still stand.[77] While Congress accepted Cogswell's D.C. fountain in 1882, correspondence from the Commissioner's office confirmed that a design was not submitted with the original request.[78] Upon seeing the photograph of the design for the fountain a year later, the commissioners found the fountain to be inappropriate for Washington, D.C. The reason for its inappropriateness was unsurprisingly "the statue surmounting the fountain, presumably of the donor" as "public places and grounds of the capital" were reserved specifically for monuments of great, famous men—a category into which Cogswell did not fall.[79]

This hiccup aside, Cogswell nevertheless erected a fountain in the capitol at 7th Street and Northwest Pennsylvania Avenue in Washington, D.C., though it was not topped with a statue of himself (fig.11). Instead, the fountain shows two dolphin-like fish creatures intertwined on a pedestal surrounded by four columns and a roof.[80] A six-foot bronze bird, resembling a crane, heron, or "Japanese stork" stands atop the roof with

[77] Refer to figures 11-13.
[78] [A57.1. carton 1, folder 4] Henry D. Cogswell Papers, BANC MSS 84/61 c, Bancroft Library, UC Berkeley.
[79] Ibid.
[80] The sculptor is unknown though all the fountains seem to have come from the Monumental Bronze Co. in Connecticut. See Bancroft Library MSS 84/61c 1:2 (carton 1) and James M. Goode, *The Outdoor Sculpture of Washington, D.C.: A Comprehensive Historical Guide* (Smithsonian Institution Press, 1974), 358-359.

lanterns surrounding the entire structure, which contained a refrigeration component under the base.[81] A Washington, D.C. newspaper also referred to Cogswell as an "eccentric millionaire" and summarized the controversy over the initial design that the proposed "guardian of fountain" looked strikingly similar to Cogswell himself.[82] This was not the only time news reporters referred to Cogswell as eccentric, possibly signifying a vague description of him that avoided outright criticism but also without offering praise.

Despite many critics, not all Cogswell monuments were derided or poorly received. A hand-written note from two San Francisco residents preserved in Cogswell's time capsule collection reads "God bless the giver of this so beautiful and useful Fountain."[83] A letter addressed to Cogswell in 1883, on behalf of the Morphy Brothers and "the undersigned citizens of Amsterdam N.Y," asked Cogswell for one of his "beautiful public drinking fountains" and thanked him for his generosity.[84] Such letters and correspondence show many residents appreciated the Cogswell fountains, and municipalities may have even asked for them. While their aesthetic value may have been debated, the ability to provide clean drinking water was appealing and filled public demand. In the first half of the nineteenth century, the average consumption of alcohol did increase as other beverages tended to be more expensive than whiskey, and cities

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[81] "The Ice Water Fountain," *Evening Star* (Washington D.C.), 14 June 1884. *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*. Lib. of Congress. <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83045462/1884-06-14/ed-1/seq-2/>.
[82] Ibid.
[83] [letter from Charles Frederic Waldemar Nissen and Antonio Nunez, Box 2:24.] HDC Time Capsule Collection, MS 559, CHS.
[84] [A53.1-A53.2, carton 1:3] Henry D. Cogswell Papers, BANC MSS 84/61 c, Bancroft Library.

often lacked clean water.[85] Clean drinking water was not necessarily readily available in the nineteenth century, and Cogswell's fountains promised cool drinking water.

The Cogswell's fountains, whether appreciated or hated, were testament to the role of the built environment in mobilizing public responses as well as the limits of reform. As one man responded to *a San Francisco Call* reporter following the toppling of Cogswell's statue in 1894, he defended Cogswell's "many works of improvement tending to benefit and enrich the city and State" speculating that "as drinking fountains increase beer halls may naturally be supposed to decline and shut their door."[86] While some residents may have respected efforts to improve the city, Cogswell's teetotaling temperance vision was too hideous or moralizing to occupy public space in the eyes of those who tore down his statue. On the other hand, some residents agreed with the reasoning behind temperance fountains.

Furthermore, the unkind treatment of Cogswell's gifts sometimes elicited sympathetic responses in the press. One 1898 article from the *Call* reads:

> The treatment accorded to Dr. Cogswell's gifts in this city has been outrageous. Making due allowance for all the doctor's eccentricities, the spirit of his philanthropy was high and noble. He gave the city an endowed technical school and attempted to beautify its streets with fountains. The people accepted the school and stoned and demolished his fountains. In a less barbarous community than this the act of the crowd who lassoed the fountain at the foot of California street and pulled it down would have encountered severe punishment. Here it is regarded as a rare piece of humor.[87]

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[85] Blocker, *American Temperance Movements*, 9-10. After 1850, beer began to replace whiskey as the primary alcohol consumed, Blocker 65.
[86] J. H. Culver interviewed in "Image Breakers," *San Francisco Call*, January 3, 1894.
[87] "Dr. Cogswell's Fountains," *San Francisco Call*, Volume 84, Number 51, 21 July 1898 page 6. CDNC.

Although the statue was vandalized by lasso four years earlier, the fountain's base at the corner of California and Market streets in San Francisco was not removed until 1898. This article, published shortly after its removal, highlights the opinion that though the doctor may have been "eccentric," his donations were unfairly ridiculed. Contemporaries may not have necessarily known how to place Cogswell, and those sympathetic to his benevolent intentions may have also been uncomfortable with his self-monumentalizing. "Eccentric" then acknowledged his penchant for self-gratifying philanthropy while avoiding direct characterization. In this news article, the city's lack of appreciation is represented as "barbarous," implying an uncivilized or undeserving nature of the city's inhabitants. Such an insult on civilized character might imply a racial or class criticism of the perceived lawlessness and disorder of the city; however, the group who brought Cogswell's fountain were artists—some of whom would have been considered respectable. The "barbarous" nature of the vandalism then harkens more to the city's connotations as a wild and lawless—to be discussed in depth later along with the vandals' identities.

The 1898 *San Francisco Call* article above ends with the conclusion: "However, we are still of opinion that Dr. Cogswell's fountain was properly removed… we think the fountain should have been removed, if for no other reason than to obliterate a conspicuous evidence of municipal meanness."[88] Though sympathetic to Cogswell, the writer of this piece nonetheless justified the fountain's removal as a way of erasing its history of mockery, vandalism, and overall lack of civic respect. In this view, the

[88] Ibid.

monument had become symbolic of public disrespect and mockery and was therefore justified in its removal. “Municipal meanness” could easily characterize the fate of many of Cogswell fountains and reinforces their affective qualities, producing a sense of meanness and mockery, within public opinion and discourse. Though Cogswell’s fountains sometimes produced sympathy as in the case of this article, the disdain they elicited often proved stronger in guiding their destruction.

Cogswell’s relationship to the larger context of temperance movements is worthy of discussion in that he appears to have been unaffiliated with temperance societies, at least officially. After the removal of his statue from his fountain in 1894, according to the *San Francisco Call*, he told a reporter: “For in and out of season it seems as if I must be maligned and my motives impugned. They say I'm a temperance crank. I'm not. I'm not identified with any temperance Society or organization, but I do believe in it.”[89] In this statement, Cogswell distanced himself from organized movements and “cranks,” while still acknowledging his dedication to the ideals of temperance. While it is impossible to know what Cogswell meant by “cranks,” it can be assumed he regarded himself as less radical or vehement in his temperance advocacy. Furthermore, it may be a coded way of referring to temperance organizations who, as mentioned earlier, may have been women’s organizations.

Additionally, Cogswell’s personal papers and time capsule contained clippings and ephemera related to temperance organizations but do not indicate his direct involvement in them. For example, a clipping advertising Free Ice Water Fountains from

[89] “Image Breakers,” *SF Call*, Vol.75, Number 34, 3 January 1894, CDNC.

the Moderation Society in New York in one of Cogswell's diaries extolled the virtues of free water—especially for the poor.[90] He also seems to have had a relationship with this society's vice president as reflected in his correspondence and papers.[91] Publications and programs relating to temperance were also preserved in his time capsule. These examples show that although Cogswell valued the work of temperance organizations and advocates, he himself was somewhat of an isolated reformer—reforming from his own sense of obligation as well as from his own funds. Cogswell reinforces Blocker's argument that there was no singular temperance movement and that this social reform agenda was carried out in various forms—and in the case of Cogswell—somewhat alone.

Cogswell's philanthropy, not overtly associated with a particular group or organization, may partially further an understanding of his monuments' reception. Often criticized as gaudy displays of self-gratification and self-monumentalizing, Cogswell's fountains may have been doubly criticized for lacking organizational or group backing—only reinforcing a sense of self-serving philanthropy. For example, in 1885 *the Daily Alta California* published a piece by superintendent Culver of Prospect Park in Brooklyn. He wrote:

> The Cogswell fountain plague has happily reached the climax of its virulence and is now on the wane, owing largely to the interest which the press has taken in the subject…This aggregation of metals has no claim whatever as a work of art—rather the contrary; and the water supply for drinking purposes is insufficient and secondary to the main object— that of celebrating Cogswell.[92]

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[90] [Diary Vol 30, 1889, 2:12], HDC Papers, BANC MSS 84/61c, Bancroft Library, UC Berkeley.
[91] Ibid.
[92] "Cogswell Drinking Fountains," *Daily Alta California*, Vol. 38, Number 12721, 10 February 1885, CDNC.

This article shows both the far-reaching nature of Cogswell's philanthropy and bicoastal interest in his fountains. From California to New York, these fountains garnered strong reactions. Culver's opinion reflects the common criticism that Cogswell's fountains possessed no artistic or cultural value and only served to celebrate their donor. Although Cogswell's gifts from himself to cities were well intentioned, the individual purchasing of public space and, by extension, history and cultural capital lie at the heart of much criticism.

Cogswell's self-representation raises the question to what extent self-monumentalizing was considered acceptable by nineteenth-century residents in San Francisco. Though criticized in many cities, the press and local artists in San Francisco were among the harshest of Cogswell's critics. Often represented as comedically self-serving, Cogswell's place in the public sphere was deeply tied to collective contempt for the grand, narcissistic displays of his statues. As one *Daily Alta* article on a Park Commissioner's meeting put it, "The request of Dr. Cogswell…to have the fountain erected at once, was not looked on with favor. The Cogswell fountain, without the Cogswell statue, the Commissioners thought, might do."[93] As this article shows, the issue was not so much temperance or fountains within public space, but rather the fact that they were topped with Cogswell. Opposition to such statues arguably arose from the notion that Cogswell was not worthy of being monumentalized or memorialized in the same way common for presidents, soldiers, and other often-commemorated figures.

[93] "THE PARK COMMISSION," *Daily Alta California*, Volume 42, Number 14206, 28 July 1888, page 2. CDNC.

However, it was not uncommon for philanthropy and monumentalizing to be closely tied to the names of supposedly great men and wealthy individuals in the context of the Gilded Age. Though not as well-known as the Rockefellers or Andrew Carnegie, Cogswell's public donations highlighted questions over the role of private individuals in buying or donating public spaces. A 1899 *San Francisco Chronicle* article on Carnegie's library donations to California cities mentions Cogswell. The article reads:

> Carnegie libraries promise to become more numerous than Cogswell fountains were before the municipalities accepting them discovered that they were being imposed upon. But, like museums, they promise to be of much greater value to the people of the cities favored than fountains or monuments, although the one may quench the thirst of man and beast and the other may adorn locality and charm the eye.[94]

This article is notable in questioning the role of private philanthropy in public space, as well as the overall purpose of public institutions and monuments. Comparing the roles of libraries and museums to fountains, the reporter cited Cogswell's fountains to illustrate how philanthropy may become a burdensome imposition on cities. Despite practicality or visual pleasure, this reporter asserted fountains and monuments served the public far less than educational intuitions. This article implies private philanthropy comes at a cost if there are stipulations or donations are not appreciated by the public. While philanthropy as a means of self-commemoration was not uncommon, Cogswell's peculiarity lied in the realistic, literal self-representation embodied by his statues.

The self-gratification implicit in Cogswell's statues of himself raise the question of how a man making claims to philanthropy and helping others could justify such un-

[94] "Carnegie's Library Gifts," *SF Chronicle*, December 3, 1899, SFPL NewsBank.

modest displays of narcissism? The context of both philanthropy and temperance are both relevant. In *Theatre, Culture and Temperance Reform in Nineteenth-Century America*, John Frick discusses the role of theater and temperance plays in exerting temperance ideas over the public. The overall theatricality and spectacle of temperance and broader reform movements—through plays, pamphlets, books, emotional pledges and meetings—may shed a greater light of understanding on Cogswell's un-modest, monuments.[95] Historian Karen Halttunen also reinforces this sense of theatricality in social mores, writing that by the second half of the century, "the genteel performance enacted by living middle-class men and women was becoming more openly and self-consciously theatrical."[96] I think Cogswell's statues might be read through this context as a performance of middle-class values, like temperance, in hopes of inspiring reform within a wider public. These scholars show the extent to which proper behavior and cultural customs were performed and self-consciously theatrical—whether as morals, manners or both. In other words, temperance reform might be understood as very much spectacularized, and Cogswell's self-aggrandizing reinforces the theatricality of philanthropy. This being said, Cogswell's performance of temperance through fountains, perpetual in theory, were unpopular to his audience of San Franciscans.

[95] John W. Frick, *Theatre, Culture and Temperance Reform in Nineteenth-Century America* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 34.
[96] Karen Halttunen, *Confidence Men and Painted Women: A Study of Middle-Class Culture in America, 1830-1870*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982), 172.

Public Space and Regional Identity in Late Nineteenth-Century San Francisco

Formative Myths

I have proposed reading the iconoclastic toppling of Cogswell's statue in 1894 not just as drunken defacement of property, but as a meaningful act. Erika Doss writes:

> As acts of iconoclasm, and hence as assaults on public art considered offensive and inappropriate, cultural vandalism articulates struggles over self and state redefinition during critically transformative socio-political moments…times of profound political upheaval and social transformation.[97]

From news sources, Cogswell's fountains were clearly deemed "offensive," at least in aesthetic terms, to more than a few viewers. Because of the aesthetic inappropriateness of Cogswell's self-monumentalizing, negative reception to these monuments created a discourse negotiating public, shared space. As reflected in the press, the removal and disregard for these monuments did not seem to upset many people, with the exception of some sympathetic defenses and the reaction of Cogswell himself. Cogswell's fountains failed to articulate a collective sense of the city's urban character and its inhabitants. Doss's definition of cultural vandalism stresses a relationship to self/ state definition at moments of social or political change. Reading Cogswell's monuments within this framework then begs the question of what "upheavals" or "transformations" were occurring in San Francisco during the 1880s and 1890s? Answering this question requires a discussion how civic or regional identity and historic narratives were in the process of being formed and solidified through public space towards the close of the century.

[97] Doss, "The Elephant in the Room: Prejudicial Public Art and Cultural Vandalism," 23.

The regional context of San Francisco is essential to framing the unsavory reception Cogswell's monuments received. While the popular myth of the city has been rooted in the Gold Rush and lawlessness of the "frontier," historical scholarship has challenged this narrative. Complicating the myth of an anti-bourgeois, hyper-manly, lone forty-niner figure, historian Brian Roberts argues "the gold rush was a rebellion against certain middle-class values; this revolt, in turn, was largely carried out by middle-class individuals."[98] Despite the reputation of the forty-niner as the opposite of bourgeois respectability, in reality many of those who moved West during the Gold Rush were part of—or hoped to become—middle class and embodied those "standards of success, self-control, morality, and respectability."[99] Cogswell definitely fell into this category of respectable middle-class men from the East and not an outlaw, bachelor-miner figure. Roberts also challenges the Gold Rush myth that reinforced separate spheres by stressing the gendered experience of the event even for women who were "left behind" or never went to California themselves.[100] This scholarship, insisting upon the middle-class nature of many forty-niners, is significant in situating Cogswell's own migration but also because many of those who fashioned themselves as "pioneers" sought to create a different version of the city's past than what they themselves actually experienced. While Cogswell adhered to respectable, middle-class morality, many of his contemporaries that made up the city's elite prioritized different ideals in creating a civic identity.

[98] Brian Roberts, *American Alchemy: The California Gold Rush and Middle-Class Culture*, 15.
[99] Roberts, *American Alchemy*, 17.
[100] Ibid, see chapter 3.

In a similar vein to Roberts' work, Barbara Berglund's *Making San Francisco American: Cultural Frontiers in the Urban West* argues how processes of "cultural ordering" transformed a disordered, chaotic history into a "narrative designed to contain the city's diversity through the assertion of race, class, and gender hierarchies."[101] She focuses on how San Francisco became "American" or accepted within the national imaginary, not as a lawless boomtown, but as a place that had come to be "ordered" or civilized by its elites. That is not to say San Francisco was not anomalous in some ways. Acknowledging the "racial and ethnic diversity, imbalanced sex ratios, and social fluidity" that initially shaped the city in the second half of the nineteenth century, Berglund shows how these conditions were met with the imposition of hegemonic racial, gender, and class norms "as much or more than the democracy and individualism that Turner placed at the nation's core."[102] Roberts and Berglund highlight a more conservative vein of the region's history than the popular myth of a highly individualized, masculine, lawless frontier where supposedly normal hierarchies did not exist. These histories emphasize the need to view the region through its nuances, rather than overstressing popular perceptions of an isolated convention-defying place that may reproduce nationalistic or regional tropes of exceptionalism. Furthermore, these tensions between the exceptional, mythic narrative and the more conservative realities created the context for debates over public space.

[101] Barbara Berglund, *Making San Francisco American: Cultural Frontiers in the Urban West, 1846-1906,* 219.
[102] Ibid, page 10 and page 9.

Not only were middle-class men and elites shaping the city's popular narrative in the second half of the nineteenth century, the urban landscape of the city itself was still in the early stages of development. Architecture, design, and artistic taste were also at the fore of San Franciscans' attempts to solidify a regional identify. In discussing architect Arthur Page Brown, historian Kevin Starr writes:

> The architectural challenge to San Francisco, Brown believed, was part and parcel of a larger challenge as well—the coming of age of the city. As of yet, he believed, San Franciscans did not have the proper regard for architecture and the aesthetics of the cityscape because the city had not yet collectively made up its mind to aspire to civic greatness.[103]

Referring to the 1890s, Starr iterates the idea that the city had not yet developed a sense of collective, civic identity, and therefore architectural styles were not fully fleshed out. Returning to Doss's characterization of cultural vandalism during moments of upheaval and transformation, in Cogswell's context these transformations were cultural and aesthetic as much or more than they were political. As Starr describes a perceived lack of architectural identity and, as part of the built landscape, monuments may also be read within attempts to create a coherent sense of identity through shared spaces. The negative reception and vandalism of Cogswell monuments then may be read as a rejection of his vision of civic identity either embodied through temperance, lack of artistic taste, or self-representation. Regardless of which facet was most important, it is clear that what Cogswell sought to represent with his monuments was not equally valued by all members

[103] Kevin Starr, *Inventing the Dream: California Through the Progressive Era* (Oxford University Press: 1985), 184.

of the larger public who did not feel these statues were valid within a developing sense of public space and identity.

The 1894 Midwinter Fair's Role in Shaping Regional Identity

The Midwinter World Fair held in San Francisco in 1894 represented perhaps one of the largest efforts to develop a popular perception of a distinct San Franciscan character within the national imagination. The first World's Fair held in San Francisco, following the successful model of Chicago's 1893 Columbian Exposition, the Midwinter Fair highlighted the efforts of local leaders and politicians to create an identity for the city. The lassoing of the Cogswell fountain at California and Market Streets in 1894 closely coincided with the fair's opening, further reinforcing the notion of civic upheavals and transformation in the 1890s.

News stories surrounding the statue's defacement reflect a concern with the city's reputation to visitors but also among its aesthetically-inclined inhabitants. The *San Francisco Examiner* reported Cogswell lying "in Effigy" on January 2, 1894:

> It was suggested that some aethetic [sic] natures of the city, believing that the architecture of the fountain was not of a high enough standard for a Midwinter Fair year, had quickly made room for something that might be better, feeling secure in the thought that there could be nothing worse.[104]

This article illustrates how aesthetic vigilantes toppled Cogswell's statue shortly before the Midwinter Fair's commencement. The city's hosting of the fair, at least according to this article, demanded a higher standard of public art and monuments to impress the

[104] "A Fountain's Fall," *San Francisco Examiner*, January 2, 1894, SFPL.

influx of visitors. Furthermore, this fair was an attempt to brand the city as a cultural center and to break away from its reputation as merely a boomtown. On one hand, the somewhat vigilante nature of the statue's removal reinforces a sense of the city without firm order, on the other hand, the motivation of removing a monument that was not up-to-par with public expectations complicates this. This tension reflects the extent to which public monuments, on the eve of the city's international fair debut, were considered meaningful sources of contested public identity.

Another article published in the *San Francisco Examiner* two days later also reinforced the close connection between the Fair, as the city's chance to define itself, and the Cogswell fountain as representative of backwardness. This article read:

> The police do not know who pulled the statue down, and they don't much seem to care. The thing was an eyesore…It stood where every visitor entering the city by the way of the ferries saw it almost as soon as he set foot in the municipality. It caused many jests and jeers at San Francisco's artistic conceptions. It became typical of wild Western lack of culture. People sighed when they thought of how it would affect…[those] from afar who are about to visit the Midwinter Fair.[105]

Again, in this article artistic taste are at the core of public criticism. However, a public or popular willingness to define San Francisco are also central to these aesthetic criticisms. The statue's prominent location by the ferry terminal produced contempt as it occupied such a prime position in public space, greeting newcomers to the city. Furthermore, not only did the fountain's location represent the gateway to the city, but the "wild Western lack of culture" points to an important tension in efforts to define the city and desires to assert a sense of "culture." Referring back to Berglund's argument about the processes of

[105] "The Downing of Cogswell," *San Francisco Examiner*, January 4, 1894, SFPL.

ordering San Francisco to break with its Gold Rush origins and the connotations that carried, the destruction of Cogswell's California and Market Street fountain encapsulated these process. This article shows the tension between wild, western "frontier" and cultured, cosmopolitan city at the fore of the 1894 Midwinter Fair and central to the destruction of the Cogswell fountain. At this moment, city boosters and local politicians were attempting to flesh out a distinctive regional identity that balanced both Gold Rush mythology and refined, supposedly-civilized character.

In relation to Cogswell fountains and the broader making of urban space and identity, the Midwinter Fair is significant as these expositions had strong ideological implications, promoting deeply racialized and gendered views of progress and achievement.[106] Resembling other World's Fairs, the Midwinter Fair touted both national, patriotic progress and that of the local and regional. The achievements of California—and San Francisco by extension—were represented in racist, gendered, and imperialistic terms. As Berglund writes, Sunset City expressed the will of local elites to make San Francisco a "thoroughly civilized, conquered, and thus 'American' place… and the promotion of a West still wild enough to be regionally distinct but also domesticated enough to be suitable for incorporation into the fabric of the nation."[107] The city was then

[106] See Barbara Berglund, *Making San Francisco American*; Arthur Chandler and Marvin Nathan, *The Fantastic Fair: The Story of the California Midwinter International Exposition, Golden Gate Park, San Francisco, 1894* (California: Pogo Press, 1993); and Robert W. Rydell, John E. Findling, and Kimberly D. Pelle, *Fair America: World's Fairs in the United States* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 2000).

[107] Sunset City was the fair's location in Golden Gate Park, analogous to the White City. Berglund, *Making San Francisco American*, 27.

presented as both exceptional in its "wild," frontier origins while still aligning with national ideals in its settler colonial discourse of conquest and taming.

A regional mythos based on a colonial, male-centric narrative was central to the place-based identity created at the Midwinter Fair, exemplified by the '49er Mining Camp attraction. The camp included a dance hall, gambling house, and stage coaches that bandits would hold-up—supposedly recreating the unruliness of Gold-Rush era California (figures 14 through 16). This attraction romanticized robbery, gambling, and other vices to celebrate a lawless past. Although this myth of undeveloped, wild Western character would seem at odds with a modern, cosmopolitan urban identity, fair organizers and city promoters reconciled this tension with a progressive narrative. In an article on the Mining Camp exhibit, Berglund describes how this exhibit expressed a "creation myth," blending nostalgia for a white-pioneer settlement and self-made "rugged" masculinity and "contrasted California's savage past to its current state as an urban, industrial metropolis… to construct meaningful identities for the present."[109]
In this analysis, elites in the 1890s reconciled conceptions of a rougher, forty-niner history with a more "civilized" present that stressed a narrative arc of progress and civilization or conquest. The romanticization of the white miner-pioneer figure at the fair and in a larger California mythology served the purposes of current racist and xenophobic discourses in regards to Asian, particularly Chinese, residents of San Francisco as well as

[109] Barbara Berglund, "'The Days of Old, the Days of Gold, the Days of '49': Identity, History, and Memory at the California Midwinter International Exposition, 1894," in *The Public Historian* 25, no. 4 (2003): 30.

the dispossession of Mexican-Californio residents and the genocide of Native Californians post-statehood.[110] Glorified in popular narratives, the violence of the region's past was central to its frontier mythos and was continually reenacted within public space.[111]

Souvenir photo collections provide a view of how exhibits at the fair highlighted the simultaneous erasure and romanticizing of violence incurred by Western settlement. Staging colonial conquest as entertainment, fair spectacles linked ideas of racial superiority and empire to create a hegemonic regional history narrative. Images of "The Rescue: Pawnee Jack and the Modoc Indians" represent the Wild West Show genre (figures 17-18). In these images, Pawnee Jack points a gun while the Indian performers wield hatchets and bows, highlighting a contrast between supposed modernity and traditional weaponry, dress, and so forth. While the identities of the performers remain unknown merely looking at the photograph, the reference to Modoc Indians in the scene's

[110] For more see the following articles: Sucheng Chan, "A People of Exceptional Character: Ethnic Diversity, Nativism, and Racism in the California Gold Rush;" Joseph O. Jewell, "'An Injurious Effect on the Neighbourhood': Narratives of Neighbourhood Decline and Racialised Class Identities in Late Nineteenth-Century San Francisco," *Immigrants & Minorities* 36, no. 1 (January 2, 2018): 1–19. DOI:10.1080/02619288.2017.1355734; James A. Sandos, ""Because He Is a Liar and a Thief": Conquering the Residents of "Old" California, 1850-1880;" Shirley Ann Wilson Moore, ""We Feel the Want of Protection": The Politics of Law and Race in California, 1848-1878," *California History* 81, no. 3/4 (2003): 96-125. doi:10.2307/25161701. Also the following books: Amy Sueyoshi, *Discriminating Sex: White Leisure and the Making of the American "Oriental,"* (Urbana; Chicago; Springfield: University of Illinois Press, 2018); Benjamin Madley, *An American Genocide: the United States and the California Indian Catastrophe, 1846-1873* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2016).

[111] The ubiquity of racialized violence was not limited to the initial period of Anglo-American immigration around the Gold Rush as Mary Ryan writes: "The violence on the streets of San Francisco after the Civil War was part of a spatial reordering of the people in the name of public order. In San Francisco immigrants from Asia and prostitutes were singled out as the kinds of people whose place in the city demanded spatial confinement. This bold outline of social difference in urban space was to have powerful political consequences in the decades to come." In *Civic Wars: Democracy and Public Life in the American City during the Nineteenth Century*, 220.

was most likely reminiscent of the Modoc War in Northern California and Southern Oregon two decades earlier. Regarded as the "last Indian war" in California from 1872-1873, this conflict was widely publicized in the media attention at the time that captivated popular imagination.[113] After the war, performances and shows reenacting the war became common, coinciding with the emergence of Buffalo Bill's show business in the early 1870s.[114] The Modoc War stood in for a larger, statewide narrative of suppressing indigenous populations and avoided an acknowledgement of those local to the Bay Area.

Not only do the images of this performance represent a glorification of violence towards indigenous people, they highlight gendered dynamics of imperial and "civilizing" discourses. Historian Boyd Cothran recounts how shortly after the Modoc War, an American peace commissioner publicly told the story of how a Modoc woman nicknamed "Winema" saved his life during the conflict. Initially told in lectures and shows, Winema was quickly popularized in novels and popular entertainment, becoming a narrative similar to that of Pocahontas as a romantic, mythicized protector instrumental in aiding white men.[115] This contextualizes images of Modoc Indians and Pawnee Jack from the Midwinter Fair as this performance may have drawn from such popular images created in the 1870s and 1880s. At first glance, these images may be interpreted as the central male figure with the gun is "rescuing" the woman. In light of Cothran's

[113] Boyd Cothran describes the war as a "five month long peace negotiation that turned campaign of extermination" in *Remembering the Modoc War: Redemptive Violence and the Making of American Innocence* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2014), 1.
[114] Ibid, 85.
[115] An American military peace commissioner named Alfred Meacham gave lectures and staged shows featuring a woman named Toby Riddle (renamed Winema in these representations) who was a translator during the conflict. Ibid, Chapter 3: 81-103.

discussion of Winema as a popular figure, the image may alternately be read as the woman rescuing the white men. In both readings, the images reinforce gendered dynamics of colonization through entertainment at the fair. Whether an anonymous damsel or Pocahontas-type savior, the woman's role in this image represents imperial conquest as a gendered enterprise where women exist to be rescued and subjugated by white men or to aid them in such endeavors. Furthermore, this spectacle highlighted a regional variation of the gendered fetishization of indigenous people common at World's Fairs and in wider popular culture that linked ideas about gender, race, and progress.

The fact that Cogswell's statue was toppled from its base shortly before the opening of the fair was no coincidence as Cogswell did not fit into its narrative of empire and rugged masculinity. As a public figure, Cogswell represented neither the nostalgic vision of a manly miner nor the present image of a burgeoning urban empire the fair organizers and city elite sought to create. While Cogswell was both part of the wealthy elite and technically a forty-niner, he did not embody either vision—perhaps "too civilized" for the lawless frontier but possibly too rigid, passé, or conservative for an aesthetically-oriented, cosmopolitan ideal. Cogswell's statue welcoming all who entered the city was at odds with multiple ideas of what should be monumentalized.

Comparing Cogswell's Fountain and Other Monuments

Conceptions of empire, race, gender, and progress all contributed to visions of San Francisco as a modern, newly emergent cultural center. Though many local elites, politicians, and public figures shaped a sense of regional identity playing a role in the

creation of a popular narrative, Mayor James Phelan stands out among them. Inheriting wealth from his Irish-immigrant father, Phelan was born in San Francisco and "saw himself…as a political leader and patron of the arts."[116] Phelan was a city booster who made large financial contributions to fund the 1894 Midwinter Fair thus promoting and bringing visitors to the city.[117] Serving as mayor from 1897 to 1902 and later a state senator, Phelan embodied a specific brand of San Franciscan elites who upheld an urban identity for the city rooted in empire, whiteness, masculinity, and culture.

Phelan's role is significant in the story of San Francisco's urban transformation and in making public space. A Progressive and a Democrat, Phelan hoped to make San Francisco a major cosmopolitan center for the West and consolidate the entire Bay Area into a single urban, metropolitan area.[118] He and other city leaders advocated for damning and bringing water from the Hetch Hetchy Valley to provide water for the city thus allowing for "modernization" and urban growth.[119] As mayor and a private citizen, Phelan was a proponent of the City Beautiful Movement, creating infrastructure, and public utilities.[120] Lastly, he commissioned or patronized many public monuments worth comparing to Cogswell's fountains.[121]

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[116] Robert W. Cherny, "City Commercial, City Beautiful, City Practical: The San Francisco Visions of William C. Ralston, James D. Phelan, and Michael M. O'Shaughnessy," *California History* 73, no. 4 (1994): 300. https://doi.org/10.2307/25177450.
[117] Arthur Chandler and Marvin Nathan, *The Fantastic Fair*, 4.
[118] Gray Brechin, *Imperial San Francisco: Urban Power, Earthly Ruin* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006), 99-100.
[119] Because of ramifications for the Yosemite Valley, this plan was largely controversial among environmentalists at the turn of the century. Robert W. Righter, *The Battle over Hetch Hetchy: America's Most Controversial Dam and the Birth of Modern Environmentalism* (Cary: Oxford University Press, Incorporated, 2006), 4.
[120] Robert Cherny, "City Commercial, City Beautiful, City Practical," 301-304.
[121] Gray Brechin, *Imperial San Francisco*, 121.

Cogswell's drinking fountains were not the only ones to have sprung up in the city of San Francisco at this time. Many statues were erected around the turn of the century not far from Cogswell's along busy Market Street, some of which still stand today. Through erected a few years after the fall of the Cogswell statue in 1894, the Admission Day Monument and Mechanics or Donahue Monument are significant as counter-examples to Cogswell fountains in representing the region's sense of collective identity. Both monuments still stand to this day, doubled as fountains at the time, and appealed to values different from Cogswell's. The same sculptor, Douglas Tilden, created both monuments with the support of James Phelan. Why these monuments were highly regarded and still remain while Cogswell's were the "butt of a joke" merits discussion.

The Admission Day Monument, commemorating California's entrance to the union, represents the mythic past linked to the Gold Rush and Manifest Destiny that local elites appropriated to construct a regional identity. In an article on Tilden's monuments, art historian Melissa Dabakis describes how Mayor Phelan attempted to solidify "a patriotic and civic-minded population" and San Franciscan identity that blended "'civilized' urban existence" with Gold Rush myth.[122] Phelan was responsible for donating the Admission Day Monument to the city's Board of Supervisors in 1896 before becoming mayor.[123] An 1895 *San Francisco Call* article announcing plans for the monument claimed "the design is entirely Californian and patriotic" as Tilden himself

[122] Melissa Dabakis, "Douglas Tilden's Mechanics Fountain: Labor and the 'Crisis of Masculinity' in the 1890s," *American Quarterly* 47, no. 2 (1995): 209.
[123] "PHELAN MAKES A PRINCELY GIFT," *SF Call*, Volume 79, Number 71, 9 February 1896.

was Californian and stressed the design's artistic merit depicting "a winged female form, symbolical of California" and "heroic figure of a man" with a flag.[124] These details were in stark contrast to Cogswell's fountains that were not only perceived as hideous but were produced in the East and shipped to the city. With *Admission Day*, Phelan's plan rejected anything un-Californian as if it was a concrete category or identity.

The fountain also honored the Native Sons of the Golden West, an organization concerned with constructing the state's historical narrative around the forty-niner past and responding to the influx of later migration to the state, often echoing nativist sentiments (fig. 20).[125] The organization defines "native sons" as settlers in California during the Gold Rush and initial moment of statehood who formed the group in the 1870s amidst anxieties over continued (foreign-born and American-born) migration to the state.[126] The fountain reinforced the goals of the Native Sons by linking the state's history and inception to the Gold Rush. The rhetoric of xenophobia and Manifest Destiny are deeply connected to public feelings of patriotism and regional identity the Admission Day Monument represents.

The monument's iconography reinforces many mythic tropes associated with the state. The bronze and marble monument represents a winged woman on top of a column

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[124] "To Ornament the City," *San Francisco Call,* 16 November 1895, CDNC. Refer to figures 19-21.
[125] "PHELAN MAKES A PRINCELY GIFT," *SF Call*, Volume 79, Number 71, 9 February 1896.
[126] The NSGW website reads: "But by the mid-1870s, many more new residents were flooding into California… Old-timers shook their heads and worried that, with the nature of the population changing so rapidly. That it was only a matter of time before the colorful history of the Gold Rush and early-day statehood soon would be forgotten and neglected. So they hit upon an idea. Why not form an organization of men who had been BORN in California. Whose mission it would be to preserve the state's history." "What is a Native Son of the Golden West?" on https://nsgw.org/what-is-a-native-son-of-the-golden-west/. Accessed May 27, 2019.

with a young man standing on the fountain's base (fig. 19). The youth waves a flag in one hand and in the other holds a pick axe behind his back, representative of the Native Sons or a forty-niner settler. Drawing upon the singular miner as illustrative of the state's inception, the statue does what the *San Francisco Call* article from 1895 expressed, in that it solidifies a sense of state and local identity within that of the larger nation—embodying masculinity, wealth and rugged individualism. The young man holding a pickaxe reinforces a mythic forty-niner, male-centric narrative of the frontier wholly separate from the celestial woman on top of the column.[128] Above her head, she holds "an open book of the free constitution, dated September 9, 1850, in bold letters, the date of the admission of the State."[129] The allegorical representation of California as a winged woman maintains the myth of "settling" the West as a gendered endeavor, where femininity represents an ideal of land to be tamed and conquered. On the base of the fountain, water would have been dispensed from the mouth of a bear, another symbol of the state (fig. 21). The white, masculine settler-colonial narrative of Manifest Destiny is reinforced by the divine woman sanctioning the state's entrance to the Union, while the boy's flag-waving suggests the frontier has been conquered. Very much an exclusionary,

[128] Mary Ryan discusses how in the nineteenth century, women (though largely politically disenfranchised) often appeared within the public in the form of abstractions or allegorical representation as seen in this monument. She writes: "Gender, whose clearest mark was the female other set apart from the universal man, appeared in public life in 1825 in evanescent and abstracted guises. Personified by the classical goddesses honored in public ceremonies, gender was at once the symbol of the Republic and a sign of the exclusion of women from its universal, rational, disembodied plane of public deliberation…women were a phantomlike public presence during that auspicious time when the Republic was planted on American soil." In *Women in Public: Between Banners and Ballots, 182 -1880*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 1992), 172-173.

[129] "PHELAN MAKES A PRINCELY GIFT," *SF Call*, Volume 79, Number 71, 9 February 1896.

patriotic and mythic representation of the past, this monument reifies the notion of a Californian identity rooted in the Native Sons' narrative of the past.

Furthermore, *Admission Day* is important as a monument that enshrines California into a hegemonic national narrative, celebrating admission to the union. The significance of commemorating California's statehood and official entry to the nation can be linked to Frederick Jackson Turner's 1893 proclamation that the frontier had closed. In *The Incorporation of America*, historian Alan Trachtenberg discusses Turner's "frontier thesis" as significant in marking both the supposed "end" of the American impetus to colonize but also an opportunity to create national coherence through the "invention of an America 'connected and unified' in the imagination if nowhere else."[130] Though the end of the frontier raised questions about the future of the nation (with supposedly nowhere left to colonize), it also generated a myth of American character that was deeply tied to a narrative of white settlement and colonial violence in the West.

Trachtenberg argues "the West" was a site for generating coherence within the national imagination but also an environmental and economic vision. He writes: "As myth and as economic entity, the West proved indispensable to the formation of a national society and a cultural mission: to fill the vacancy of Western spaces with civilization, by means of incorporation (political as well as economic) and violence."[131] The Admission Day Monument, and its Gold Rush narrative of local history, clearly demonstrates this link between the regional context of California and the larger national

[130] Alan Trachtenberg and Eric Foner, *The Incorporation of America: Culture and Society in the Gilded Age* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1982), 17.
[131] Ibid, 17.

one based on the exploitation of both natural resources (gold) and erasure of existing communities by white settlers. This mythic narrative, and the essentializing American values of rugged, individualistic, masculinity that accompany it, compose the hegemonic regional identity I refer to in this thesis. While alternate versions of regional identity existed in San Francisco, I would argue this one was the most dominant in that it continues to be enshrined within popular representation.

Created after the Admission Day Monument, the Mechanics Monument honored "pioneer" Peter Donahue and also represents a sense of shared values and mythic past (figures 22-23). Donahue was a local mechanic turned industrialist who founded Union Iron Works and was instrumental in shipbuilding and railway construction.[133] Donahue's story of immigration, hard work, and wealth as titan of industry resonated with a common nineteenth-century success story (not wholly unlike Cogswell's). Donahue's son, J. Mervyn Donahue, willed 25,000$ for a" public fountain dedicated to mechanics in memory" of his father.[134] In her analysis of the monument, Melissa Dabakis describes a combination of the rhetoric of Manifest Density, "a sanitized notion of industrialization and progress," and anti-Chinese assertions of a white working class.[135] In her reading, this fountain presents a progress narrative built on industry and (white) labor represented by classical European nudes.

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[133] "PHELAN, FOR THE CITY ACCEPTS STATUESQUE DONAHUE FOUNTAIN," *San Francisco Call*, Volume 87, Number 167, 16 May 1901, page 8.
[134] "COLD WATER FOR THIRSTY CITIZENS," *San Francisco Call* Vol. 80, Number 63, 2 August 1896. The fountain was planned as early as 1896 but not completed until 1901.
[135] Dabakis "Douglas Tilden's Mechanics Fountain: Labor and the 'Crisis of Masculinity' in the 1890s," 208, 212-213.

Dabakis also frames the fountain though the 1890s "masculinity crisis," reflecting not only anxieties about whiteness and labor unrest but also drawing attention to the homoeroticism and "visual pleasure" implicit in the monument's depiction of strained, muscular, barely clothed male bodies.[136] In this reading, both pleasure and anxiety lie in the virility of the laboring muscular bodies highlighting a manly ideal with underlying fears of middle-class weakness. While she provides a much more thorough analysis than summarized here, the tangled and muscular male bodies depicted are a stark contrast to Cogswell's fountains depicting an older, more sentimental ideal of manhood embodied by Cogswell and his imaginary "Rustic boy." One article described Cogswell as "scrupulously neat and always well groomed… tall and proud of his manly figure," as well as vain and always wearing expensive clothes.[137] The benevolent figure of Cogswell, deeply concerned with his appearance and a genteel, bourgeois sense of manliness presents an image quite different from the strong, laboring-hyper masculinity of the unclothed mechanics. Cogswell's leisurely stance and relaxed offering of water further lacks the dynamism or vitality depicted by the strained mechanics.[138]

The Mechanics Monument can be considered more aesthetically complex while also presenting a group narrative, in contrast to Cogswell's unimaginative and individualistic representation. An 1896 article announcing plans for the fountain also claimed that the monument would be artistic, only reputable sculptors would be

[136] Dabakis, "Douglas Tilden's Mechanics Fountain: Labor and the 'Crisis of Masculinity' in the 1890s," 214.
[137] "San Francisco's Most Eccentric Millionaire," *SF Chronicle*, July 22, 1900.
[138] Refer back to figures 5 and 22-23.

considered, and the materials and artist themselves should be from California.[139] Reflecting a concern with "native" Californians and artistic quality, Tilden fulfilled these requirements as a reputable, well-known sculptor and as a Californian.[140] Donahue and his son are represented on the fountain's base, but only their profiles, highlighting that they are not the focal point of the work (fig. 23) Even if the Mechanics Monument did commemorate the Donahues, they are peripheral to the monument's narrative of progress and labor—from miners to industry in building the modern city. While Cogswell was regarded as a pioneer, and that label was often on his fountains, his fountains did not embody collective narratives. In contrast, both Tilden monuments described here championed similar tropes, both national and regional, with specific ideological purposes. Representing pioneers, the working class, and patriotism; these artistically-celebrated monuments appealed to a collective, hegemonic civic identity perceived as vastly different to Cogswell's self-representation.

The contrast between the statues erected by Cogswell and James D. Phelan represent the larger context of turn of the century conceptions of masculinity/ manhood and the political public sphere. In *Political Manhood*, historian Kevin Murphy discusses two models of manhood during the Progressive era characterized by "mollycoddles" and "red-blooded" strenuous men. While Cogswell was by no means a politician, he was part of the city's elite engaged in public acts of philanthropy. Building off the scholarship on

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[139] "COLD WATER FOR THIRSTY CITIZENS," in *San Francisco Call* Volume 80, Number 63, 2 August 1896.

[140] Tilden was born in California, studied at the California School of Design, and later worked in New York and Paris. He exhibited at the Salon and Beaux-Arts in Paris as well as numerous World's Fair's/ International Expositions. Birgitta Hjalmarson*, Artful Players: Artistic Life in Early San Francisco*, 212.

changing conceptions of manhood in the nineteenth century, Murphy highlights a shift in political, elite circles that championed a working class ideal of virility thus distinguishing themselves from male reformers, conceived of as "overcivilized," associated with temperance and abolition.[141] In this analysis, the "mollycoddle" was cast "as an ineffective and weak male figure—the debased other to the idealized 'strenuous man'—within popular American discourse."[142] Murphy also discusses the two-fold fears middle-class manhood being emasculated and fear of immigrant men as central to understanding efforts "refashioning politics and manhood," especially in urban settings.[143] The refashioning of manhood in the political sphere can be exemplified by the Admission Day Monument and Mechanics Monument.

Tilden's Mechanics Monument is a prime example of how a political and social elite (embodied by Mayor Phelan) attempted to reinforce a conception of virile manliness centered around working classes while asserting whiteness. Furthermore, this monument alongside the Admission Day Monument reflects the idea that city officials wanted public, urban space in San Francisco to be dedicated to the embodiment of "strenuous manhood" and not a middle-class, temperate or "overcivilized" manhood represented by the water cup and temperance pledge. In Bederman's argument, the remaking of manhood at the turn of the century was deeply tied to anxieties about race, both implicit in the Mechanics Monument and the Native Sons rhetoric of *Admission Day*. The figure

[141] Kevin Murphy, *Political Manhood: Red Bloods, Mollycoddles, & the Politics of Progressive Era Reform* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008), 3-4.
[142] Ibid, 1.
[143] Ibid, 6-7.

of James D. Phelan links San Francisco's urbanization and changing built environment to such Rooseveltian conceptions of masculinity and empire.

Phelan's vision of San Francisco was inseparable from imperialist and racist sentiments reflected in his ideas and the monuments he helped bring to fruition. His idea of a modern, cosmopolitan center meant white and European. Phelan was outspoken about the supposed "Yellow Peril" he believed threatened the Western United States and later advocated for curbing Japanese immigration as a Senator.[144] A racialized conception of place embodied by Phelan, was visible in the 1890s and shaped public discourse. In 1896, for a speech given for the opening of the Mechanics Institute Fair, Phelan wrote:

> She [San Francisco] lives to serve as the handmaid of commerce between the western shores of the United States and the lands facing the great Pacific; she lives to preserve the ocean free for the carriage of California's wealth; she lives to be the capital of an empire, and to foster the arts of peace; to yield for her citizens the fruits of a civilization, riper and better than those which gladdened the Athenian heart and fulfilled the Roman's boast.[145]

As in the iconography of the Admission Day Monument, the language Phelan uses to refer to the city is feminized and tasked with the subservient role of metaphorical handmaid. In this speech, the city's role is one of economic commerce but also a cultural center of "civilization" harkening to Classical Antiquity.[146] Given the strong imperial

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[144] Phelan was elected to the Senate in 1914 and his re-election campaign slogan was "Keep California White" (fig. 24). Gray Brechin, *Imperial San Francisco*, 167.
[145] James D. Phelan, *The New San Francisco: an address by James D. Phelan at the opening of the Mechanics' Institute Fair, Columbia Theatre, Sept. 1, 1896.* 6. Hathi Trust. https://hdl.handle.net/2027/uc2.ark:/13960/t48p5xb76.
[146] His comparisons to Rome and Greece echo an obsession with empire and align with the City Beautiful movement's aesthetic inclination to neoclassicism. For more on City Beautiful, see William H. Wilson, *The City Beautiful Movement* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989), 88.

tone, we can assume his ideas for lands facing the Pacific entailed colonization—possibly hinting at a new "frontier" in the Philippines and Hawaii. Though delivered before the Spanish-American War, this speech reflects clear imperial ambitions for San Francisco as a capital not only of the Western United States but also a larger American empire in the Pacific.[147] Based on the previous discussion, these imperial overtones are echoed in the Admission Day Monument in celebrating a Californian-American empire.

Employing the discourses of civilization and strenuous manhood in politics and the built environment, Phelan's speech reflects Bederman's claim that the "discourse of civilization" was employed to "link male dominance to white supremacy."[148] Intertwining imperialism, gendered difference, economic supremacy and racial dominance, public space in San Francisco reflected the discourse of civilization; However, Bederman acknowledges this discourse was contradictory and "never totalizing."[149] The Mechanics Monument championed "red-blooded," working-class masculinity yet Phelan's position on the Waterfront Strike in 1901 cost him the support of labor unionists and ultimately his reelection as mayor.[150] Just as the Admission Day Monument represents the state as feminized allegory, thus denying the actual presence of women within that state, the Mechanics Monument similarly dissociates labor as a

[147] Phelan supported colonization of the Philippines and served on the committee to erect the General Dewey Monument in honor of his role in the Spanish-American War. Philip J. Ethington, *The Public City* 382.
[148] Gail Bederman, *Manliness and Civilization*, 23.
[149] Ibid, 23.
[150] For greater detail on this strike and Phelan's reaction see John Elrick, "Social Conflict and the Politics of Reform: Mayor James D. Phelan and the San Francisco Waterfront Strike of 1901," *California History* 88, no. 2 (2011): 4–56.

bourgeois ideal from the real working class.[151] As a patron of the arts and incredibly wealthy, privileged man, there is little to indicate Phelan was any more "strenuous" than Cogswell but his rhetoric and the monuments he commissioned showed the extent to which the discourse of civilization—embodied by a specific kind of masculinity and whiteness—were powerful in shaping the way politicians and elites in San Francisco promoted these ideals. The discourse of civilization and its gendered and racialized vision of progress and achievement, were reflected in public spaces and events.[152]

Bohemian San Francisco

Tilden's monuments did what Cogswell's did not—fashion a larger sense of civic identity around values of the frontier, labor, masculinity and patriotism rather than temperance and individualistic philanthropy. Tilden's monuments, as mentioned earlier, were also regarded as high works of art and as having significant aesthetic value. While Cogswell's monuments were unappealing to civic leaders and elites for such reasons, they were just as unpopular (if not more) among artistic circles. San Francisco's "bohemian" character in this period in central to Cogswell's unpopularity as a group of artists were responsible for toppling his Market Street statue. The "iconoclastic spirits" or culprits responsible for this act were revealed to be four young artists and self-identified

[151] Refer back to Mary Ryan in footnote 128 on page 56. Melissa Dabakis also discusses this monument in the context of labor in San Francisco in "Douglas Tilden's Mechanics Fountain: Labor and the 'Crisis of Masculinity' in the 1890s."
[152] Chandler and Nathan, *The Fantastic Fair, 4,31* .

bohemians.[153] In an article on the city's fin-de-siècle bohemianism, San Francisco historian Marvin Nathan characterizes the toppling of Cogswell's statue as marking "the symbolic beginning of a Francisco renaissance in art and literature which lasted for a decade."[154] According to Nathan, the destruction of this obtrusive work was a defining moment for an artistic resurgence in San Francisco. This bohemian identity was another strand of regional myth-making that emerged in the late nineteenth century.

The bohemian artistic circles that flourished in San Francisco at the close of the nineteenth century warrant discussion due to their relationship to Cogswell and the creation of a local identity.[155] Largely influenced by popular myth of California as a place of freedom, a circle of writers and artists formed in the city. In the 1890s, these Bohemians often gathered in the city's Montgomery Block building and many were associated with *the Lark*—a magazine publication created by and circulated within an artistic circle that called themselves Les Jeunes.[156] In reference to Les Jeunes, Kevin Starr writes: "For all their preciousness…[they] sought something—a mood, a style—

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[153] I use the bohemian to refer to these artistic circles as other scholars have also referred to them as such. I do not use this term to specifically refer to members of the Bohemian Club, though there is overlap between members of this club and bohemian artists discussed. The Bohemian Club, founded in the 1870s was an all-male organization based out of San Francisco with an outpost in the Sonoma coast redwoods. This club was an artistic circle in a sense but became an elite group not necessarily limited to artists. As Christine Scriabine writes: "They wanted to enjoy the freedom of Bohemia without the poverty and social alienation such a life generally connoted." In "Bruce Porter: San Francisco Society's Artful Player," *California History* 85, no. 3 (2008), 53.

[154] Marvin R. Nathan, "San Francisco's Fin de Siècle Bohemian Renaissance," *California History* 61, no. 3 (1982): 197.

[155] In addition to Nathan and Scriabine's articles in *California History*, for more on bohemians in California and San Francisco see Chapter 8 "Bohemian Shores" in Kevin Starr, *Americans and the California Dream, 1850-1915* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973).

[156] Idwal Jones, *Ark of Empire: San Francisco's Montgomery Block* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday and Co., 1951), 18.

specifically and freshly Californian."[157] These artists were not concerned with a forty-niner past but turned to the natural landscape as source for artistic and cultural identity.[158] While constructing an identity different from that of mayors and politicians, this artistic milieu was nonetheless engaged in similar processes of creating a unique, place-based identity and character into which Cogswell's statues intruded.

Two of the main bohemians responsible for the statue's lassoing were Bruce Porter and Gelett Burgess, both prominent in literary and artistic circles. Porter was a Swedenborgian landscape artist and stained glass artist while Burgess was an artist and professor turned furniture designer.[159] Largely influenced by European aesthetes, the Arts and Crafts Movement, and Art Nouveau, these two were among many artists concerned with visual arts and attempting to fashion a local sort of aesthetic style and culture. Both Porter and Burgess were notable individuals among the aesthetic vigilantes who lassoed Cogswell's statue, and Burgess was later forced to resign from a UC Berkeley teaching position after being implicated in the affair.[160] Though not necessarily part of the city's political elite, bohemians like Porter and Burgess represented an artistic elite that was instrumental in creating a sort of mythic regional identity.

The Bohemian Club, where artists and art-lovers could assemble was also relevant to somewhat elite, local claims to the San Francisco region as exceptionally aesthetically oriented. Initially founded by "frontier journalists" to meet amongst themselves, the club became a place for fostering local artistic dialogue and festivity, but also became a place

[157] Starr, *Americans and the California Dream,* 259.
[158] Nathan, "San Francisco's Fin de Siècle Bohemian Renaissance," 202.
[159] Ibid 196-199; Scriabine "Bruce Porter: San Francisco Society's Artful Player," 48.
[160] Nathan, "San Francisco's Fin de Siècle Bohemian Renaissance," 198.

to bridge artists and wealthy patrons—as exemplified by James Phelan who was briefly president of the club in the early 1890s.[161] Public historian Christine Scriabine describes the club's founding by:

> a small group of San Francisco journalists, writers, actors, and lawyers who sought a place where they could go to enjoy the arts and produce artistic performances. Banding together to create an original masculine atmosphere at a time when culture was seen primarily as a female enterprise, the club's members from the beginning also included those whose talent was merely an "appreciation" of the arts.[162]

This club helped define a reputation of an artistic or aesthetic regional character for the Bay Area that flourished around the turn of the century claiming the prestige of artists such Joaquin Miller, Mark Twain, Jack London, George Sterling, and Maynard Dixon in addition to Burgess and Porter.[163] Though some were artists, many members were wealthy and powerful men who, in the case of Phelan, influenced public space and civic identity linked to a sense of imperial progress and artistic culture. Furthermore, the club itself exemplifies this vision as it was an exclusionary space of creative and intellectual discourse articulated in a gendered way as homosocial play and respite from daily life. Though not all "bohemians" in San Francisco would have been affiliated with the club, many artistic circles and groups interacted with one another to create the notion of a Western, artistic character in Northern California and specifically based in San Francisco.[164]

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[161] Starr, *Americans and the California Dream,* 249.
[162] Scriabine, "Bruce Porter: San Francisco Society's Artful Player," 52.
[163] Starr, *Americans and the California Dream,* 246, 253; Scriabine, "Bruce Porter: San Francisco Society's Artful Player," 52; Nathan, "San Francisco's Fin de Siècle Bohemian Renaissance."
[164] Nathan, "San Francisco's Fin de Siècle Bohemian Renaissance." Also see Birgitta Hjalmarson*, Artful Players* for a longer history of artistic circles in SF into the fin de siècle*;* and Ben Tarnoff, *The Bohemians:*

Cogswell sometimes surfaces in scholarship on these bohemian circles not in his own right, but in relation to, or as the antithesis of, these artistic figures. The removal of his statue by reveling artists further reinforces the act of cultural vandalism as rebellion against an aesthetically-devoid, possibly even elitist, work of public "art" that elicited strong opposition on the grounds of taste. In an article on Porter, Scriabine writes "they considered [it] a hideous eyesore and an embarrassment to the city. The fact that the orator was Henry D. Cogswell, an avid temperance crusader, probably was not irrelevant."[165] Aesthetic value aside, the wealthy dentist offering a glass of water and temperance pledge to passersby was likely at odds with the sense of freedom and tastes of artistic, bohemian-minded individuals, who possessed their own ideas of what the city's character was. Furthermore, the ostentatious statue, cast from monumental bronze and representative of the mass-produced monument craze, would have been doubly offensive to those who modeled themselves after aesthetes and considered themselves dedicated lovers of art and taste. Les Jeunes' occupation with taste (characterized by their own artistic inclinations) within the urban landscape was not limited to public art but extended to the city's architecture which they believed to be ugly and also in need of a "revolution of taste" as well.[166]

Returning to Millard's *History of the San Francisco Bay Region* discussed at the beginning of this thesis, the chapter mentioning Cogswell begins with a description of the

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Mark Twain and the San Francisco Writers Who Reinvented American Literature (New York: Penguin, 2015) for a popular literary history.

[165] Scriabine, "Bruce Porter: San Francisco Society's Artful Player," 53.

[166] See Don Graham, "Frank Norris and Les Jeunes: Architectural Criticism and Aesthetic Values." *American Literary Realism, 1870-1910* 11, no. 2 (1978): 235–42. Page 236.

previous century's statue mania. Not only does this history mention the Cogswell's fountain being vandalized by a group of artists, the author portrays San Francisco's "growing art sense" as the anecdote to the craze of cheap, ugly sculpture.[167] Millard writes:

> All over the country during the 70s and early 80s there ran a perfect mania for the collection of cheap bric-a- brac, grilled work, plaster statuary, and grim-crackery. The craze struck San Francisco but it did not last long in this city, for it was ridiculed out of existence long before the people of the middle west were dumping the inartistic junk from their shelves.[168]

Millard echoes the sentiment that part of what made the proliferation of statues so objectionable was not just the amount of them but the cheap, mass-produced materials they were made of that rendered them "inartistic junk." He also asserts this notion of the city as artistic or aesthetically-minded and less tolerant of or susceptible to this craze. In his view, the city's concern with art began in the 1860s, though its architectural sensibility was not fully realized until the 1890s.[169] Many of Cogswell's fountains were produced by the Monumental Bronze Company in Connecticut.[170] As Moffat's article on Cogswell points out, the white bronze (actually a kind of zinc) the Cogswell statues were cast from allowed for cheaper and quicker production.[171] Not only was this material cheaper, it supposedly endured much longer than stone and did not tarnish like other

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[167] Millard, *History of the San Francisco Bay Region*, 289
[168] Millard, *History of the San Francisco Bay Region*, 289.
[169] Ibid, 286-289.
[170] See MSS 84/61c 1:2 in HDC Papers, at the Bancroft Library for receipts and correspondence relating to the Monumental Bronze Co.
[171] Moffat, "The Intemperate Patronage of Henry D. Cogswell," 134.

metals, maintaining a grey color that resembled granite.[172] Not only did Millard's 1924 history condemn the cheap statuary craze, it also cast the Cogswell statue as a foil to supposedly real or reputable statuary (meaning the Tilden monuments and the Dewey Monument).

Many other critics, like Mark Twain in Rochester and a *San Francisco Examiner* article calling the Market Street statue Dr. Cogswell's "pot-metal image," brought attention to the cheap material.[174] As stated in a *San Francisco Chronicle* article, "This community, like some others, objected to immortalizing Cogswell, especially in cheap, inartistic bronze."[175] Critics of Cogswell's mass-produced self-representation link the "bronze" material to aesthetic offence. In a historical moment when monuments and statuary could be produced cheaply, Cogswell's critics in San Francisco represented mass production as the opposite of art, or at least what art *should* be. This criticism ties into larger aesthetic questions over art and reproduction beginning in the nineteenth century. Using the example of the Lincoln Memorial, Kirk Savage explains how the text of the Gettysburg Address within the memorial's space "ceases to be a mere 'mechanical reproduction'" instead becoming a "treasure piece" in which "the monument manufactures its own aura."[176] Borrowing from Walter Benjamin's conception of the art work's aura, the aura is produced by the space and ritual embedded in the live viewing experience rather than the authenticity of the text (the Gettysburg Address reproduced on

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[172] Monumental Bronze Co., *White bronze monuments, statuary, portrait medallions, busts, statues, and ornamental art work : for cemeteries, public and private grounds and buildings,* Monumental Bronze Co, 1882. 1-2. Smithsonian Libraries, Internet Archive. doi: 10.5479/sil.738344.39088010585735
[174] "A Fountain's Fall," in the *San Francisco Examiner*, January 2, 1894. SFPL.
[175] "San Francisco's Most Eccentric Millionaire," *SF Chronicle*, July 22, 1900.
[176] Kirk Savage, *Monument Wars*, 6.

the wall) or image (statue of Lincoln) themselves. As Benjamin discusses, a work's aura is often derived from its authenticity or singularity whereas mechanical reproduction as a feature of modernity complicates that model—particularly in terms of how art is defined and perceived.[177] Whether a singular Cogswell statue would have been regarded by his critics as a work of art is dubious, but the fact that the statues were reproduced is central to their reception as lacking artistic merit and not worthy to be considered art.[178] Though narcissism and self-representation were part of the larger criticism, the mass reproduction of Cogswell's image in "bronze" was also central to their artistic offensiveness, especially among the bohemians who were inspired by the Aesthetic and Arts and Crafts movements.

While bohemian and elite circles often overlapped, this did not necessarily mean the aesthetic ideals of artists always lined up with a hegemonic, popular narrative of the West embodied by frontier, Gold Rush mythology. In regards to these divergences from the forty-niner past, historian Raymond Rast writes:

> As the nineteenth century waned, a number of regional writers began to detest the romantic image of the American West that dime novels and other accounts had popularized. These writers sought to disrupt this image with depictions of what Norris referred to as "the vigorous, real thing." At the same time, a small group of writers across regional lines began to practice literary realism."[179]

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[177] Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," in *Illuminations*, edited by Hannah Arendt, translated by Harry Zohn, from the 1935 essay (New York: Schocken Books, 1969), 2-4.

[178] Refer back to press descriptions of the Admission Day Monument praising its design and the use of bronze and marble. To see the reproduction or the sameness of Cogswell fountains, see figure 26 of the Cogswell fountain that stood in San Jose and figure 5 of the fountain in San Francisco.

[179] Raymond W. Rast, "The Cultural Politics of Tourism in San Francisco's Chinatown, 1882-1917," *Pacific Historical Review* 76, no. 1 (2007): 30, https://doi.org/10.1525/phr.2007.76.1.29.

In other words, while still very much concerned with the representation of the West, or an essentialized Western character, some artists shifted from a romanticized rendition to one concerned with reality and authenticity. As Rast's article points out, bohemian representations of the "authentic" West were very much invented, and in the case of San Francisco, tied to a fetishization and often racialized tourism of the city's neighborhoods like Chinatown, North Beach, the Mission, Barbary Coast, and so on.[180] Though some of these neighborhoods were notable mainly as ethnically diverse and/ or working-class, the Barbary Coast was known for as a vice district and helped shaped the city's Wild Western image as more liberal and free than other American cities.[181]

Though tourism in neighborhoods throughout the city had existed before this aesthetic turn towards authenticity, these artists helped produced the image of a "real" West linked to a touristic gaze that othered and exoticized San Francisco's distinct neighborhoods and diverse residents. Brian Roberts views many of the middle-class or self-made forty-niners as "slumming" in San Francisco in that they could easily visit places "below" their social standing, indulge in illicit behavior, and mix with different races and classes while still being able to return to their middle-class position.[182] This notion of slumming is relevant to how San Francisco was not as liberal as popular images

[180] Ibid., 31.
[181] Berglund writes: "By geographically containing rather than eradicating the disorder of the Barbary Coast, San Franciscans could assert an image—in keeping with the city's emergence as a metropolis in the 1860s—of a well-ordered city that flirted with, yet existed apart from, its infamous vice district." In, *Making San Francisco American*, 60.
[182] Roberts, *American Alchemy,* 219.

represented, but rather an identity of the town was itself rooted in a middle-class, touristic gaze towards the city's residents and sensationalizing supposedly transgressive behaviors.

Tourism in Chinatown is just one example of how "authenticity" was connected to the creation of a civic identity and public spaces that celebrated a sense of distinction or diversity while in reality, many hierarchies controlled public space.[183] The fantasy fascination with Chinatown persisted alongside the ongoing reality of racialized violence and segregation codified through city regulations and ordinances in which "The politics of Chinatown linked race, gender, and spatial segregation in ominous ways that were not unique to San Francisco…through de jure segregation."[184] Both vigilante violence and the law asserted white supremacy within public space. Not only were claims to an "authentic" San Francisco tied to racialized and classed tourism, they were also gendered. The representation of Chinatown within a narrative of San Francisco, both by residents and outsiders also represents a contested negotiation of public space.

Just as Western writers turned from romantic representations in favor of a "real" West, this reality was still linked to a frontier-ideal of masculinity. As Roberts claims,

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[183] Tourism created another market for white, middle-class consumers contemporaneous with legal codification of Chinese Exclusion. While some of Chinatown's touristic promotion was by white profit-seekers, some Chinese San Franciscans also profited from the curiosity and touristic demand by staging and "providing what tourists wanted and expected to see" or by challenging touristic perceptions. Rast, "The Cultural Politics of Tourism in San Francisco's Chinatown, 1882-1917," 32. Rast also discusses how attempts to break from the Orientalist, white-imaginary of Chinatown as a place of immorality was replaced by a different sort of exoticizing representation, writing: "Chinese San Franciscans who sought to rechannel tourists' fascination with the quarter made more headway in the struggle against anti-Chinese racism, but their success also came at a price. They contested white entrepreneurs' representations of a vice-ridden Chinatown but substituted their own claims that Chinatown's authenticity lay in the exoticism of its architecture, theatrical performances, curios, and cuisine," 33.

[184] Mary Ryan, *Civic Wars: Democracy and Public Life in the American City during the Nineteenth Century*, 220.

Gold Rush narratives created a dichotomy between the West as denoting freedom and the East as self-restraint, creating a "gendered reality." He writes that forty-niner experiences "reflect a mapping of the realm of freedom as a space of violence, mobility, action, and, above all, as a place dominated by men…Later generations of Western writers… would reject the romanticism of the mid-nineteenth century for violent depictions of the 'real life'—because only violence was real."[185] As this quotation highlights, the notion of the West was defined by its masculinity, freedom, and violence, represented through tropes of vigilante or colonial violence, vices like gambling and prostitution, altering the natural environment, and a general rejection of middle-class self-restrained manliness. These writers who claimed the existence of a real experience, influenced by forty-niner narratives, were formative in shaping popular conceptions of the West and creating the reputation of San Francisco as an artistic center.[186] Such representations of the West as a place of freedom but also violence, stressing vigorous or strenuous manhood, were reflected in many of the monuments discussed earlier.

These examples, from Mayor Phelan and Douglas Tilden to bohemian artists, demonstrate the multitude of groups contending for public space within San Francisco in the 1890s and into the turn of the century. While I do not wish to suggest these were the only groups engaging in debates over public space and the construction of local, urban identity, these examples are significant in their relation to Cogswell. They also both embody two divergent ideas of such public or civic identity—one of laboring, frontier

[185] Brian Roberts, *American Alchemy,* 218.
[186] Such writers include Mark Twain, Frank Norris, Jack London. For more see Roberts and Starr, *Americans and the California Dream.*

masculinity and one concerned with adamantly rejecting convention and mass-produced, un-aesthetic art. Both of these counterpoints to Cogswell made lasting impacts on the built environment through monuments that doubled as fountains. Tilden's monuments discussed earlier still stand, and Bruce Porter designed a memorial fountain to Robert Louis Stevenson in Portsmouth Square in 1897 (fig. 25). This fountain contains a Stevenson quotation and is surmounted by a ship with gold sails, commemorating an individual but concerned with a larger, local literary legacy. Civic leaders, bohemians, and Cogswell all realized public space and monumentalizing was central to solidifying and creating a sense of place-based and cultural character—though the ideals they valued varied greatly.

Monuments and their Afterlives

Specific and unusual in many ways, the story of Cogswell's fountains also speaks to broader issues beyond late nineteenth-century San Francisco. In an online journal article from 2019 on Confederate monuments, visual culture scholar Courtney Baker writes:

> Monuments strive toward permanence. They are intended to surpass the duration of the event that they reference. With hard and heavy concrete, granite, bronze, and steel, monuments signal their immovability and permanence. Their erection in these decay-resistant materials makes them, much like gravestones, stalwarts against the fleshly world's "failings" of memory, mortality, and disintegration.[188]

[188] Courtney Baker, "The Loud Silence of Monuments," *Dilettante Army*, Republican Speech (Spring 2019), http://www.dilettantearmy.com/articles/the-loud-silence-of-monuments.

As shown in this quotation, the intended endurance and intransience of monuments renders them static in the sense that they are not designed to change but rather to last. However, even if the material objects themselves remain static, their reception never remains fixed and is more dynamic than the monuments themselves. Perhaps appropriately, out of the many monuments and fountains Henry Cogswell erected, his tomb is among the few that have endured. In 1894, the *San Francisco Examiner* compared Cogswell's dismantled statue to Ozymandias, representing inevitable transience and the irony of self-immortalization becoming a sight of decay.[189] Though monuments are supposed to represent permanence, eternity, and the transcendence of time, they are still subject to demise. Statues being vandalized, protested, and pulled down produce vivid images in contemporary media and politics. Monuments may experience their own sort of death, yet the changeability of the built environment and different publics render such processes complex. In Cogswell's case, the destruction of his fountains may have immortalized the memory of him more than the statues themselves. Ongoing debates over public space highlight the complicated and sometimes bizarre fate of monuments.

In Vernon, Connecticut, a Cogswell statue had a very peculiar fate. In 2005 Cogswell made his way into print once again when a resident restored a Cogswell statue to the village of Rockville in that city.[190] According to the article, in 1885 the original Cogswell statue was tossed into a nearby lake, returned only to be re-stolen, until being

[189] "The Downing of Cogswell," *SF Examiner*, January 4, 1894. SFPL.
[190] Rockville is part of the city of Vernon. Monica Polanco, "DR. COGSWELL RETURNS TO CENTRAL PARK," *The Hartford Courant*. August 4, 2005. https://www.courant.com/news/connecticut/hc-xpm-2005-08-04-0508040719-story.html.

turned to scrap metal during World War Two. An 1885 news article wrote that although it should not be condoned by "law-abiding citizens," the act of removing the statue "removes an unsightly object."[191] The same article also jokingly speculated the statue may have been removed by local democrats who "knew the strength of the temperance vote" and wanted to put Cogswell on their ticket. Either an act of aesthetic justice or opportunity to poke fun at political parties, here the tone was one of familiar indifference to Cogswell combined with relief the statue was gone. Clearly, the residents of Rockville had similar sentiments about the Cogswell fountain as those of San Francisco. Though it was defaced and eventually removed, decades later in 2005, Rockville resident Rosetta Pitkat donated $50,000 to reproduce a Cogswell statue that she had never even seen.[192] The article does little to illuminate Pitkat's motives though a 2015 press release from the Vernon Mayor pointed out she had "a lengthy history of a charitable acts."[193] Perhaps a local philanthropist who admired Cogswell, or maybe just a resident who was familiar with the stories of about his fountains, this story reflects how the death of monuments may be as impermanent as their lives. Rockville is one of the rare cases where municipalities contemporarily appreciate the gifts of Cogswell and local citizens have renegotiated public space to resurrect the bronze figure of Cogswell (fig. 27).

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[191] "Rockville," *The Press.* (Stafford Springs, Conn.), 08 Oct. 1885. *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*. Lib. of Congress. <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn92051501/1885-10-08/ed-1/seq-3/>

[192] Monica Polanco, "DR. COGSWELL RETURNS TO CENTRAL PARK."

[193] Daniel Champagne, "MAYOR CHAMPAGNE: COGSWELL MEMORIAL FOUNTAIN RESTORED TO DOWNTOWN ROCKVILLE" (Town of Vernon Connecticut, May 1, 2015), http://www.vernon-ct.gov/files/Press%20Release/2015/2015_5_1-%20%20Mayor%20Champagne%20%20-%20Cogswell%20Fountain.pdf.

With the exception of Vernon, Connecticut, Cogswell's fountains have largely been remembered as humorous relics of the "eccentric" dentist-philanthropist. While many were defaced or eventually removed, especially those depicting Cogswell, a few of his fountains still remain most notably in San Francisco; in Pawtucket, New York; and in Washington, D.C. Though Cogswell's fountain have persisted more as "the butt of joke" than a source of ongoing debate, the questions and discourses his fountains produced in late nineteenth-century San Francisco remain relevant. Monuments, and representation within public space, remain highly gendered and racialized discourses. In a 2017 *San Francisco Chronicle* article titled "S.F.'s Monuments to Male Supremacy," journalist Heather Knight wrote "Of our major park's 26 statues, just one is of a woman, but she's the nebulous 'Pioneer Mother,' created in 1914 for the Panama-Pacific Expo and not representing, you know, an actual woman."[195] Like the allegorical representation of California as a woman in the Admission Day Monument, the city's monuments continue to commemorate gendered versions of history more than they represent actual women in history.

More recently, the city has attempted to make changes in regards to its monuments, yet this process is still laden with debates over what should be represented and how. Plans for a monument to Maya Angelou in San Francisco were rejected by city officials on the basis that the artist's design was not a figurative representation of

[195] Heather Knight, "S.F.'s monuments to male supremacy: the city's public art," *San Francisco Chronicle: Web Edition Articles (CA)*, June 13, 2017. *NewsBank: America's News – Historical and Current*. https://infoweb-newsbank-com.ezproxy.sfpl.org/apps/news/document-view?p=AMNEWS&docref=news/165051469903EE40.

Angelou.[196] In other words, the proposed design of the monument—the shape of a book with Angelou's portrait in front and writing on the back—was not a statue and therefore supposedly not a proper memorial.[197] This question of symbolic versus literal or figurative representation is just as relevant now as it was in the nineteenth century. Furthermore, contemporary city officials' claims of controlling what is proper monumentalizing and appropriate for public art both resonates and diverges from the turn of the century. While mayor Phelan and other city officials at the end of the nineteenth century may have viewed themselves as patrons of the arts, the erection of monuments and public art has, and continues to be, largely shaped by elites with political or financial power rather than by the artists who create them, or by the general public.

In San Francisco, as throughout the country, some monuments paying tribute to racist and imperialist values have recently been removed. In 2018, the *Early Days* sculpture depicting a missionary and a vaquero standing over a Native American man on the ground was removed.[198] Erected in 1894, just a few years before *Admission Day/* the Native Sons Monument, this monument was erected to commemorate the settling of California and enshrined the colonial violence that accompanied that settlement. Though the *Early Days* statue depicting the Spanish colonial and Mexican periods was removed,

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[196] Chloe Veltman, "Plans for Maya Angelou Monument in San Francisco Face Long Delay," KQED, October 17, 2019, https://www.kqed.org/arts/13864632/plans-for-maya-angelou-monument-in-san-francisco-face-long-delay.

[197] San Francisco Supervisor Catherine Stefani said: "The legislation I wrote was clear: that the Maya Angelou statue be a significant figurative representation of Maya Angelou…As I carry the legislation across the finish line to elevate women in monuments, I wanted to do it in the same way that men have been historically elevated this city," Ibid.

[198] Dominic Fracassa, "SF's Controversial 'Early Days' Statue Taken down before Sunrise," *SFChronicle* September 14, 2018, sec. Politics, https://www.sfchronicle.com/politics/article/Controversial-S-F-Early-Days-statue-taken-13229418.php.

it was only part of the larger Pioneer Monument that celebrates Anglo-American settlement of California with various nods to "progress," the Gold Rush, and figures in California history.[199] Furthermore, this monument is perpendicular to the Civic Center Plaza facing City Hall highlighting its symbolic capital in occupying prized public space.[200] The connections between the past and contemporary moments raise important questions about the power of monuments to shape individual and collective perceptions of place, belonging, and historical significance. In the 1880s and 1890s, Cogswell's fountains were disliked for a variety of reasons, owing to Cogswell's narcissism, lack of artistic taste, the imposition of temperance, failure to represent a larger collective, and so on. Many of these discourses, such as those relating to reform or the creation of a regional identity rooted in Gold Rush and frontier myths, were deeply gendered and racialized as they are today.

While I do not intend to frame the vandalism of Cogswell's fountains as comparable to the contemporary removal and controversy surrounding racist (particularly Confederate) monuments, there are nonetheless important similarities when thinking through larger questions and contexts. Though Cogswell's fountains represented a site of convergence for many different nineteenth-century threads relating to local history,

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[199] Cynthia Culver Prescott, "Lick Pioneer Monument," *Pioneer Monuments in the American West* (blog), accessed November 16, 2019, https://pioneermonuments.net/highlighted-monuments/san-francisco/lick-pioneer/.

[200] Doss writes: "Public art embodies what Pierre Bourdieu termed 'symbolic capital,' or the value, utility, and power of both what it represents and the environment it occupies (Bourdieu 1977: 114–120)… Hence when its symbolic capital is deemed untrustworthy or illegitimate public art itself may be attacked and vandalized, and even removed." In "The Process Frame: Vandalism, Removal, Re-Siting, Destruction," in *A Companion to Public Art*, ed. Cher Krause Knight and Harriet F. Senie (Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2016), 407, https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118475331.ch19.

nation, empire, and gender; overall the contestations these monuments provoked were relatively lighthearted in comparison to today's controversies that highlight ongoing racial oppression, trauma, in which human lives have been at stake. While different in terms of gravity, the notion that monuments can and should be removed if they are unrepresentative of collective, contemporary values was shared by turn of the century viewers of Cogswell's fountains as they are by many today. Regarding acts of vandalism and destruction Doss writes: "Memorials are defaced when the histories and ideologies they embody are deemed illegitimate and invalid. Rather than being seen as simply, or only, mindless acts of destruction, these acts may signal revisionist historical intentions. Cultural vandalism might be considered, then, as purposeful anger."[201] Extending this reading to all monuments points to the fact that vandalism is not merely destructive, but rather purposeful in that changing the built environment is often generative or symbolic of a change in ideas or shift in power. Furthermore, as this quotation highlights, cultural vandalism is often tied to history and its interpretation.

In the case of Cogswell, the past was not up for debate so much as the present and the future. As discussed, Cogswell's fountains were concerned with his own present—uplifting the poor and disincentivizing saloons with an alternative of clean, accessible water. While Cogswell undoubtedly erected his fountains with the hope they would remain enduring symbols of his philanthropy thus becoming representative of the past, an overt commemoration of "the past" or history was absent from most. Like most

[201] Doss, "The Elephant in the Room: Prejudicial Public Art and Cultural Vandalism," 24.

monuments, Cogswell's fountains were future-facing, best exemplified by his time capsule under Ben Franklin.

Whether in the case of Cogswell's fountains or contemporary monument debates, monuments and the built environment often produce strong feelings. Influenced by the "affective turn," Doss writes "Contrary to a Habermasian vision of a rational and collective public sphere in which sensible citizens exchange ideas and unite in progressive action, contemporary public life is marked by emotional appeals and affective conditions."[202] Though primarily concerned with contemporary public memorials and displays of grief, this conception of public life as deeply tied to emotion may also be extended to the nineteenth century as Cogswell's fountains produced a range of feelings and opinions rather than being accepted on a merely rational or utilitarian purpose of providing water in public spaces. Cogswell's fountains often made affective appeals through his charity as seen by his dedications to "boys and girls" and willingness to promote temperance. Though they often produced the opposite outcome and incited mockery alongside feelings of resent or disdain, Cogswell fountains show that monuments and their destruction, then and now, are often guided by feelings. The publics of 1890s San Francisco that mocked and defaced the Cogswell's fountains were shaped largely by humor, anger, resentment, "cavil," feelings of aesthetic righteousness, and so on rather than a "rational" debate over who and what should occupy public space. Furthermore, appeals to imperialistic or specifically masculine ideals represented and

[202] Doss, *The Emotional Life of Contemporary Public Memorials,* 12. Also see Lauren Berlant, "Critical Inquiry, Affirmative Culture," *Critical Inquiry* 30, no. 2 (2004): 445–51 also discussed by Doss.

memorialized by other monuments erected around the same time as Cogswell's were very much affective appeals to collective belonging, patriotism, and pride rooted in a hegemonic interpretation of the past and progress.

Figures

Figures 1-3 H.D. Cogswell tomb in Mountain View Cemetery Oakland
"Cogswell Monument - Oakland - LocalWiki," accessed November 24, 2019, https://localwiki.org/oakland/Cogswell_Monument.

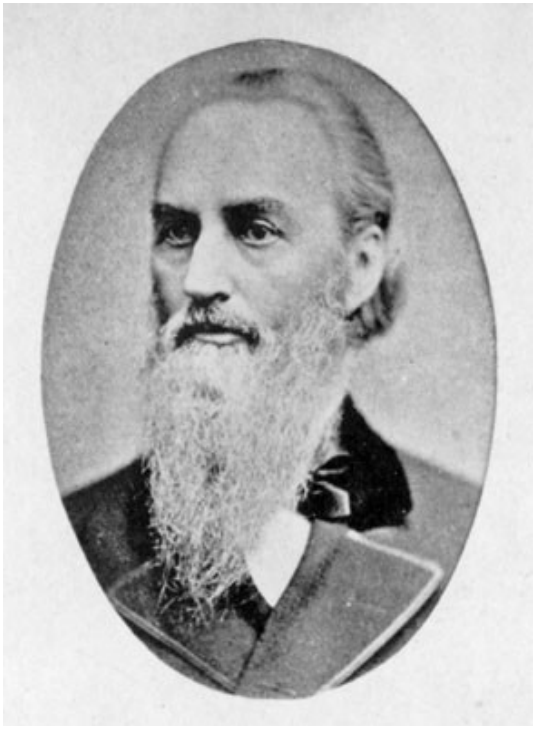


Figure 4 Dentist Henry D. Cogswell, (n.d.)
San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library on Calisphere, https://calisphere.org/item/168506b45b0cfc93684a42af1f820e38/.

Figure 5 [Henry D. Cogswell Monument, Corner of California and Drumm, (n.d.)
Roy D. Graves Pictorial Collection, the Bancroft Library, UC Berkeley,
on Calisphere, Accessed April 21 2019. https://calisphere.org/item/ark:/13030/tf467nb50r/.

Figure 6 Lantern Design for Fountains
[a.23.1, Carton 1, Folder 4] Henry D. Cogswell Papers, BANC MSS 84/61 c,
The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley

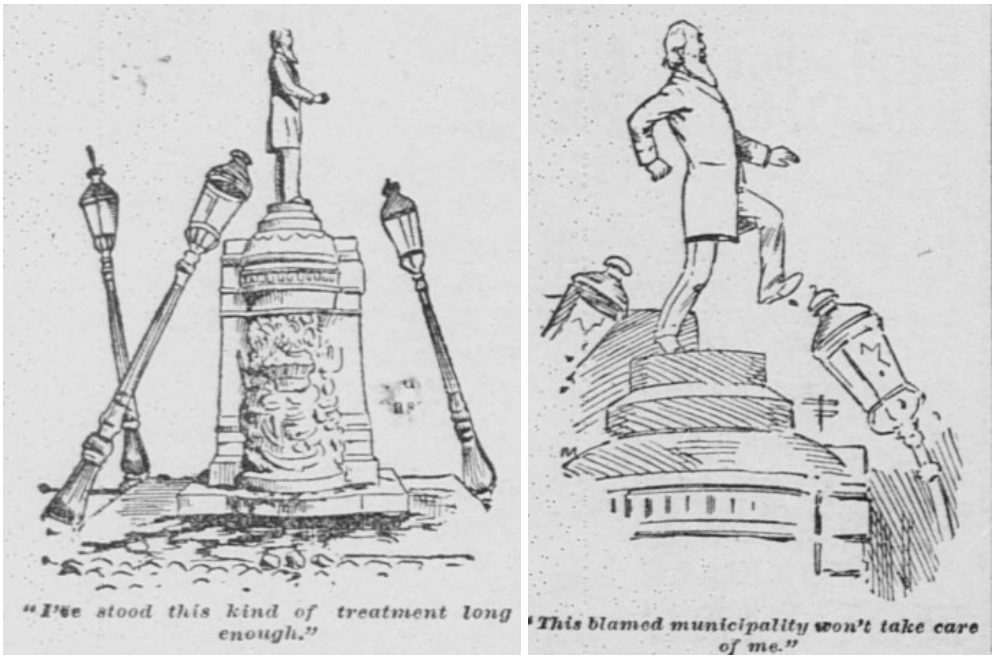


Figure 7 Illustrations from San Francisco Call*, Volume 73, Number 92, 2 March 1893*

Figure 8 Benjamin Franklin Fountain
H.D.C. Biographical Collection, California Historical Society

Figure 9 Benjamin Franklin statue located in Washington Square, (n.d.)
San Francisco Historical Photograph Collection, San Francisco Public Library.
https://calisphere.org/item/9101fb1e2398e57a5281880daea1cc4a/.

Figure 10 San Francisco Call, Volume 75, Number 34, 3 January 1894

Figure 11 Temperance Fountain,
Pennsylvania Avenue & Seventh Street Northwest, Washington, District of Columbia, DC., 1933.
Library of Congress. https://www.loc.gov/item/dc0268/.

Figure 12 Washington D.C. Fountain (detail),
Photo by Gabriella Train 2019

Figure 13 Temperance Fountain in Tompkins Square New York, 2011
Photo by Beyond My Ken on Wikimedia Commons,
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Temperance_Fountain_from_north.jpg.

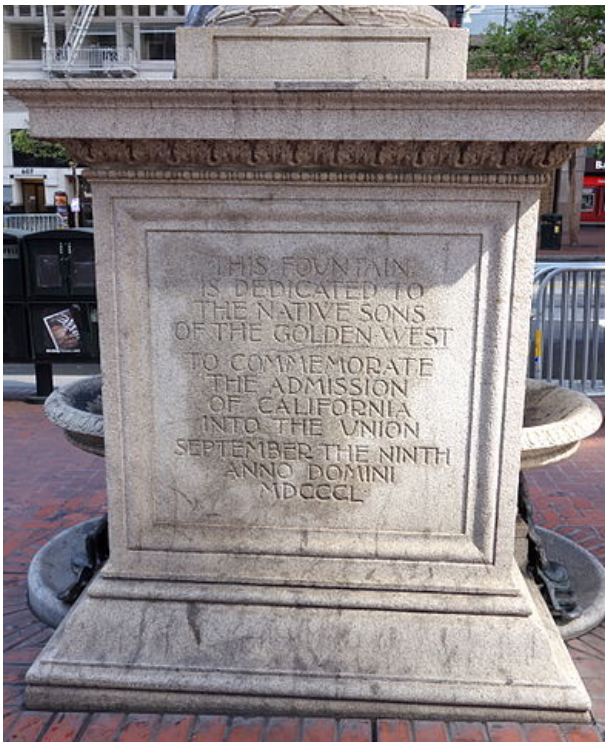
Figure 14

Figure 15

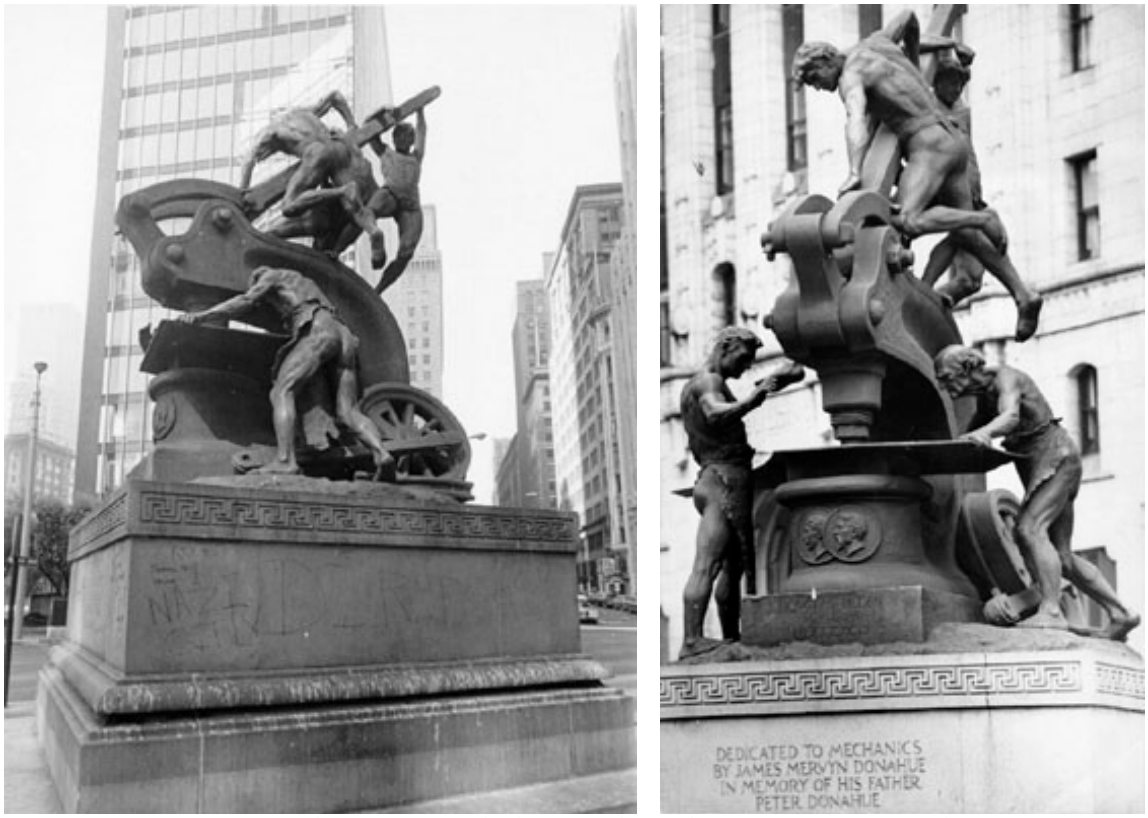
Figure 16
Figures 14-16: ['49 Mining Camp] (6 Views), 1894, by Isaiah West Taber,
Photographic prints, California State Library, California History Section Picture Catalog, https://csl.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/view/delivery/01CSL_INST/12136156430005115.

Figures 17-18 The Rescue, Pawnee Jack and the Modoc Indians, Midwinter Fair (2 Views), 1894 by I. W. Taber, Photographic prints, California State Library, California History Section Picture Catalog, https://calisphere.org/item/995a5a9ec74beec92b6f52014fc6819d/.

Figure 19 Foot of Mason Street - One Year After, 1907 [*Admission Day Monument] by Albert Dressler,* California History Section Picture Catalog, California State Library, https://calisphere.org/item/2ff839d90c4bb36fb8a316406aeb7872/



Figures 20-21 Admission Day/ Native Son Monument (detail), 2014
Photos by Daderot on Wikimedia Commons.
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Admission_Day_Monument.



Figures 22-23 Donahue Monument, also known as the Mechanics Monument, on Market Street
San Francisco Historical Photograph Collection at SFPL.
Left [AAA-9274] undated, Right [AAA-9267] 1948

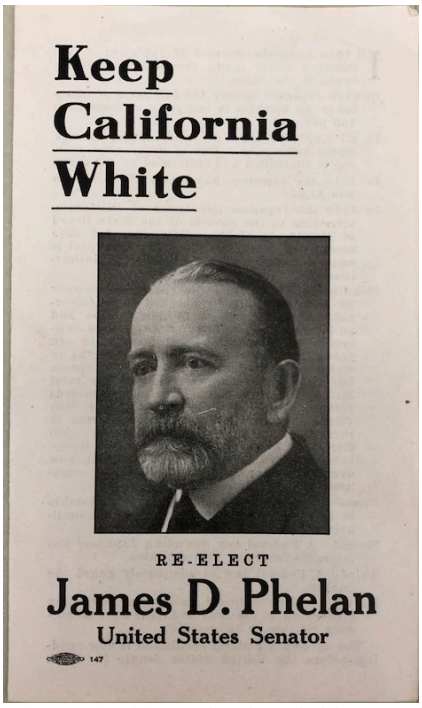


Figure 24 Re-election booklet (undated, probably around 1919 or 20)
[SFH MSS Box 10 Folder 12] James Duval Phelan Papers, SF History Center at SFPL.

Figure 25 Robert Louis Stevenson Monument (n.d.),
San Francisco Historical Photograph Collection at SFPL,
https://calisphere.org/item/3e6f0d2bc9ada29042888fd0dc8f3b8e/.

Figure 26 Main entrance to San Jose's Old City Hall (cropped), (n.d.)
Courtesy of San José Public Library, Historic Photograph Collection, California Room on Calisphere
https://calisphere.org/item/9785ed6f972f397ca5d4d5cd1902bdb2/

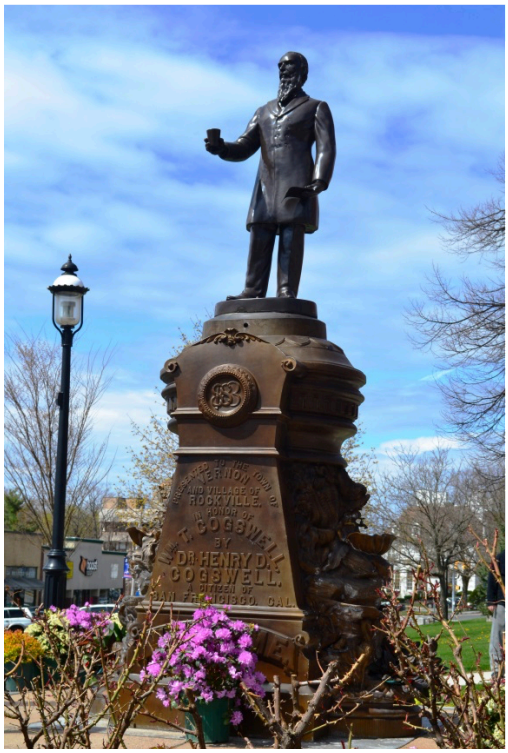


Figure 27 Cogswell Fountain in Rockville CT,
Photo Courtesy of the Vernon Mayor's Office, 2015.
http://www.vernon-ct.gov/files/Press%20Release/2015/2015_5_1-%20%20Mayor%20Champagne%20%20-%20Cogswell%20Fountain.pdf.

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